BRITISH SAVAGERY IN INDIA

Dedicated
To Those
Who gave up
Their Lives
for Freedom

British Savagery In India

Edited by
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Shiva Lal Agarwala & Co. Ltd.,
AGRA

● First Impression Nov. 1946 ●

Rs. 9/8/-

Printed by
Raj Narain
Agarwal at The
Modern Press,
Namak Mandi,
AGRA.

Published by
Kali Charan
Pandey for
Shiva Lal
Agarwal & Co.
Ltd., Hospital
Road, AGRA.

INTRODUCTION

History has been a subject of very great interest to me. When India was passing through the epoch of 1942 August-days I was strikingly reminded of the famous couplet of Wordsworth which he wrote about the French Revolution.

"Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven !"

Inspired by the spirit and the need of the time, I decided to collect the material for editing a book of historical survey on the happenings during and after the Revolutionary days of August '42. But the work could not be taken up due to my detention in the prison as a result of my being a declared and confirmed congressman. Of course, the work of compiling and editing such a history of the Movement was hampered, but the determination for it was further strengthened during my stay in jail.

On my release from the jail in 1943 August, I started it in right earnest. Finding greater facilities for it at Cawnpore, I stayed there, away from my home at Meerut, right upto the middle of May, '44. Somehow as the Government got the clue of my intention and work, my residence was searched at Cawnpore on the 20th March '44 by the C.I.D. Police without getting any trace of the matter which I was suspected to have been compiling. Again when I returned from Cawnpore (on 14th May '44) my house was searched by the C.I.D. at Meerut on 16. 5. 45 and along with some other books, the typed-manuscript entitled "British Savagery in India" was recovered. I was prosecuted for its possession by the C.I.D. under rule 39 (1) (b) D.I.R. alleging that the matter was "*prejudicial*" which is almost equivalent to "seditious." The prosecution case was "No particular portion can be pointed out but the cumulative effect of the Manuscript is prejudicial report." The trying Magistrate concurring with this opinion held the manuscript as prejudicial report (which brings into hatred and excites disaffection towards the Government established by law in British India) and thus held me guilty for having been in its possession and sentenced me to 18 months R.I. under R. 39 (1) (b) D.I.R. on 24. 1. 45.

While in the District Jail, Meerut I read in Hindustan Times dated 17.6.45 an extract of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's speech which he delivered on his release from Almora District Jail on 15th June '45, which runs as below :—

"If the British think that by keeping us in Jail for these years they have broken our spirit they are sadly mistaken. I say they are sadly mistaken." Referring to the political

sufferers he said, "I was not concerned with what these men had done, it was a savage thing to seek to make their families suffer for their wrongs. There were savages. They were those who made brazen-faced admissions of their savagery, and those who were enforcing or promulgating this savagery also fell in that category. It showed to what depths of human degradation they had gone, it showed to what they owed their position in this country."

These lines instilled in me a strong feeling to complete the contemplated "historical work" of mine. A British Judge, a part of the British administrative machinery of India considered my imprisonment as its only and adequate reward. But all the time in Jail I was feeling very very restless on my helplessness and the state of grave injustice and lawlessness in the country. Now I feel that the best remedy for me is to place this true tale of India's sufferings in the hands of the public at large for their verdict. If ventilating truth and a historical fact is a crime and sedition, every true historian is guilty of it and in that case how can I dare or desire to plead innocence and escape punishment.

The Judge while delivering his judgment in this very case remarked, "The accused has been convicted before for political offences but has now been enrolled in the local bar and intends to devote himself to the profession. I hope that after his release from prison he will profit by constant practice in the profession realise that before remedy can be effected, it is necessary to understand the facts of the particular case and not to indulge in vague and superficial analogies from other countries and other ages which bear only a slight resemblance to modern conditions." He admits that I was guilty of political offences even before this case. What else can be the political guilt in a *slave country like India* but patriotism! What of the prison walls! Nothing can shake the faith of the patriots who are determined to fight for and achieve the freedom of their country. To the advice of the British Judge, I can say nothing more than "Physician heal thyself".

I now place the book in the hands of all the readers without any distinction. Let not the foreign readers, without much knowledge of India, or young or inexperienced Indians, inflame their feelings of hatred and disaffection towards the Government of India, and form their cool and considered judgement which is the real intention and request of the author. What is and would be the judgement of the foreigners who know much about India or the aged and experienced Indians about the British Rule in India is not hidden, still a few words, by way of opinion on the present

volume, will eloquently speak their mind, which the author strongly craves.

The severity of the British doings reached its worst and farthest limit during the period of 1942-43. Even the doings perpetrated by the British Government on the Indian people after 1857, during the Punjab Martial Law in 1919, and the Civil Disobedience movement of 1930 and 1932, pale into faint colours as compared to the grim severity of the British doings of 1942-43. To prove this assertion through comparision we have also given a short account of the British doings during the years 1857, 1919, 1930 and 1932. Besides, we have traced fully the development of the events leading to the "Quit India" Move by Gandhi Ji.

Further we have drawn our conclusions which must naturally follow the policy and practice of the British Rule in India. We refrain from offering any comments from our side as the facts given in the following pages narrate eloquently the story of the British doings in India unmitigated from the very beginning of the British Rule in India. It will be seen from the account given in this book that under the British regime the conditions in India and the treatment accorded to the Indians were reminiscent not of the Nazis in Germany but luridly of the darkest ages in the History of Man.

The facts we have compiled are as authentic and as impartial as can be possible under the present circumstances. They are merely illustrative and not exhaustive as it is not possible under the suffocating restrictions imposed by the British Government of India through its agents who are none else but mostly Indians themselves.

Lastly we have appealed to our Indian brethren not to lose heart and carry on their struggle for freedom of their Motherland from the sacking slavery of the British Rule which has emiciated and degraded Indians to the present plight. We have also appealed to the human sense of the people of the world to realise the real situation due to the doings of the British Government in India.

In the end we have appended the relevant letters, statements and speeches by Gandhi Ji besides the A.I.C.C. Resolution of 8th August.

Meerut,
24-8-46.

RAM SHARAN VIDYARTHI

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Meerut, 31-3-46. RAM SHARAN VIDYARTHI

CONTENTS

Part VI. Is the Congress Responsible for the Movement ?

Appendices.

BRITISH SAVAGERY IN INDIA

PART I

HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

CHAPTER I

THE RULES OF THE COMPANY

The beginning of the British Rules in India under the East India Company is regarded from the famous battle of Plassey in 1757. It is from this very time that the feelings of absolute dissatisfaction and resentment against the British were *progressively increasing* in the hearts of the Indians. These are well known facts that how from Clive to Dalhousie the promises and signed treaties with numerous Indian Princes were violated and their states were annexed in the British territory, how the old home industries and handicrafts were ruined thus lakhs of the Indians were deprived of their livelihood; how helpless begums and queens were looted and humiliated in their own palaces, how the zamindaries of numerous zamindars were forfeited, how lakhs of Indian agriculturists were deprived of their lands, hearths and homes. Due to all these facts both Indian Princes and the people were dis-satisfied and opposed to the British Rule in India.

Dalhousie pursued this policy rather vigorously. His prohibition of the right of adoption to the Princes and the kings, which naturally resulted into annexation of several states with the Company territory, excited the wrath of the kings, princes, and zamindars against the British treatment towards them. *The British Officers* were forcing the Indians *coming on horseback* in their front to get down and walk. Their religious and social customs were dishonoured. Once a hospital was opened at Saharanpur (U. P.) where all patients without any regard for sex, sect or creed, and even for Purdah ladies were forced to go there and Indian indigenious physicians (Vaidyas and Hakims) were prohibited to see or treat any patient. The most exciting were the British desires and efforts of converting Indians to the Faith of Christianity and of its propagation among the Indian Military. The above allegations are amply borne out by the following quotations :

1. "Upon the extermination of a native state an Englishman takes the place of sovereign under the name of Commissioner; three or four of his associates displace as many

dozen of native official aristocracy, while some hundreds of our troops take the place of the many thousands that every native chief supports. The little court disappears, trade languishes, the capital decays, the people are impoverished, the Englishman flourishes, and, acts like a sponge, drawing up riches from the banks of the Ganges and squeezing them down upon the banks of the Thames"—A PLEA FOR THE PRINCES OF INDIA, by John Sullivan, Member of the Madras Council P. 67.

"Surely the natives of India must be less than men if their feelings could not be moved under such circumstances in favour of the victims of annexation and against the annexer. Surely there was not a woman whom such annexations did not tend to make our enemy, not a child whom they did not tend to train up in hatred to the *FIRANGEE RULE*—Ludlow's Thoughts on the policy of the crown pp. 35, 36.

2. "Providence has entrusted the extensive Empire of Hindustan to England in order that the Banner of Christ should wave triumphant from one end of India to the other. Every one must exert all his strength that there may be no dilatoriness on any account in continuing the grand work of making all India Chris- tian"—Mr. Mangeles, Chairman of the Directors of the East India Company in the House of Commons 1857.

"Whatever misfortunes come on us, as long as our Empire in India continues, so long let us not forget that our chief work is the propagation of Christianity in the land. Until Hindostan, from Cape Camorin to the Himalaya, embraces the religion of Christ and until it condemns the Hindoo and the Moslem religions, our efforts must continue persistently. For this work, we must make all the efforts we can and use all the power and all the authority in our hands.

—*Rev: Kennedy M. A.*

3. "At the begining of the present year (1857) a great many colonels in the Indian Army were detected in a task not less monstrous and arduous than that of Christianizing it. It has afterwards transpried that some of these earnest .... worthies.......entered the army; not as a means of subsistance, not as the theatre of exertion most congenial to their temperament but solely, and wholly for the purpose of conversion. The army was specially selected, as in times of peace it affords the utmost leisure to both the soldiers and commaders. And as there heathens may be found in great abundance on all sides without the trouble and expense, and other etcetras, or scampering from village to village...........they began preaching and distributing tracts and translations among the Hindoo and Mohamedan officers and soldiers. In the begin-

ing they were tolerated, sometimes with disgust and sometimes with indifference. When, however the thing continued, when the evangelizing endeavours became more serious and troublesome day by day the Sepoys of either presuation felt alarmed.........In the meantime the "Missionary Colonels" and "Padre Lieutenants" as the curious militaries were called were not inactive. Emboldened by the toleration of the sepoys they grew more violent than ever. They were warmer in their exhortations to the unbelievers to substitute the worship of the one true God in his son Jesus, or the thirty three millions of their hideous dieties Mohammed and Rama, hitherto were so beings, turned sublime imposters and unmitigated black-guards . ...By and by the proselytizing colonels tempted the sepoys to Christianity with bribes and offered promotions and other rewards to converts. They unblushingly used their influence as officers* promised to make every Sepoy that forsook his religion a Havildar, every Havildar, a Subedar Major and so on: Great discontent was consequence "

— Causes of the Indian Revolt.
By a Hindoo of Bengal
Dated, Calcutta the 18th Aug., 1857
Published from London by Edward Stanford—6, Charing Cross.

CHAPTER II

WAR OF INDEPENDENCE 1857

The immediate pretext which caused the out-break of the war of Independence of 1857, just 100 years after the company rule, was the use of cow's fat and lard in the cartridges which were then newly introduced for the use of Indian soldiers. These new type of cartridges were to be cut, not by hands, but by teeth. The character and significance of the war of 1857 is expressed by the English Historians themselves as can be seen in the following quotations:—

"The fact was that throughout the greater part of the northern and north-western provinces of the Indian peninsula, there was a rebellion of the native races against the English power... ....The quarrel about the greased cartridges was but the chance spark flung in among all the combustible material........ a national religious war !"

History of our own Times, by Justin
Mc Carthy, Vol. III.

"But, in fact, the greased cartridge was merely the match that exploded the mine which had, owing to a variety of causes, been for a long time preparing." —Medley's A year's Campaigning in India from March 1857 to March 1858.

In most of the places of U.P., Delhi and Bihar the Indians successfully suppressed the British authority and hoisted the green coloured flag of freedom. The rest of India also did not remain untouched or silent but more or less efforts to end the British Rule were made throughout India. Notorious to help and side with the British were the Sikh and Gurkha soldiers. All other Indian soldiers under the Leadership of the Indian Kings, Nawabs fought many a battle successfully against the British armies. The Civil administration was run very thoroughly and efficiently. Although a number of the British officers and men were killed or murdered yet the lives of the British women and children were protected and saved except one or two instances which were done in a rage by the soldiers but not under orders from any one of the responsible Revolutionary Leaders. On the contrary the story of the British tyranny and revenge is so long horrid and lurid that scarcity of space forbids its detailed narration.

The various ways of torturing, flogging, hanging and killing of men, women, and children were widely adopted. The villages were set to fire freely and innocent villagers were burnt alive. Those who tried to escape were either shot dead or thrown back in the flames. To substantiate the above statements some authentic quotations are given below :—

"We set fire to a large village which was full of them. We surrounded them and when they came rushing out of the flames, we shot them."

Charles Ball's Indian Mutiny, Vol. I pp. 243-44.

"It is better not to write anything about General Neill's revenge."

"Soldiers and civilians alike were holding Bloody Assizes, slaying Natives without any assize at all, regardless of sex or age. Afterwards the thirst of blood grew stronger still. It is on the records of our British Parliament, in papers sent home by the Governor General of India in Council that the aged women and children, are sacrificed, as well as those guilty of rebellion. They were not deliberately hanged, but burnt to death in their villages, perhaps now and then accidently shot, Englishmen did not hesitate to boast or to record their boasting in writing, that they had spared no one, and that peppering away at niggers was very pleasant pastime, enjoyed amazingly. And it has been stated, in a book patronised by official authorities that 'for three months eight dead carts daily went their rounds from sunrise to sun-set to take down the corpses which hung at the cross roads and market places' and that six thousand beings had been thus 'summarily disposed off and launched into eternity'—. An Englishman

is almost suffocated with indignation when he reads that Mr. Chambers or Miss Jennings was necked to death by a dusky ruffian, but in Native histories or history being wanting, in Native legends and traditions, it may be recorded against our people, that mothers, wives and children, with less familiar names, fell miserable victims to the first swoop of English vengeance......" Keye's History of Sepoy War Vol. II.

"One trip I enjoyed amazingly, we got on board a steamer with a gun, while the Sikhs and the fusiliers march up to the city. We steamed up throwing shots right and left till we got up to the bad places when we went on the shore and peppered away with our guns, my old double barrel bringing down several niggers. So thirsty for vengeance I was. We fired the places right and left and the flames shot up to the heavens as they spread fanned by the breeze, showing that the day of vengeance had fallen on the treacherous villians. Everyday, we had expeditions to burn and destroy disaffected villages and we have taken our revenge..... ...We have the power of life in our hands and, I assure you, we spare not.........The condemned culprit is placed under a tree; with a rope round his neck, on the top of carriage, and when it is pulled off he swings." Charles Ball's Indian Mutiny Vol. I. p. 257.

"Old men had done us no harm; helpless women, with suckling infants at their breast, felt the weight of our vengeance no less than the vilest malefactors." Holme's Sepoy War pp. 229-30.

".. ....and I know that at Allahabad there were far too whole-sale executions...........And afterwards Neill did things almost more than the massacre, putting to death with deliberate torture, in a way that has never been proved against the natives." Sir George Cambell, Provincial Civil Commissioner in the Mutiny, as quoted in the other side of *the Medal by Edward Thompson* p. 81.

As regards the mal-treatment of the British ladies specially by Nana Saheb, about which many false and fantastic rumours were current is proved to be absolutely concocted and untrue. One quotation here will suffice.

"The elementary passions of manhood were inflamed by the stories, happily not true, of the wholesale dishonour and barbarous mutilation of women ....As a matter of fact, no indignities, other than that of the compulsory corn grinding, were put upon the English ladies. There were no outrages in the common acceptation of the term, upon women. No English women, were stripped or dishonoured or purposely mutilated."

History of Our Own Times, Vol. III by
Justin Mc. Carthy.

How 150 soldiers of the 55th Indian army in Hoti Mardan-(Frontier Province) were killed is described in Narrative of the Indian Revolts" as below :—

"Of the prisoners of the 55th army more awful example was made. They were tried, condemned and every third man was selected to be blown away from guns."

The horrid scene of this tragedy is described by an English officer who was an eye witness to it as below :—

"That parade was a strange scene. There were about nine thousand men on parade ;..... ...The troops were drawn up on three sides of a square, the fourth side being occupied by ten guns............The first ten of the prisoners were then lashed to the guns, the artillery officer waved his sword, you heard the roar of the guns, and above the smoke you saw legs, arms, and heads,...........flying in all directions. There were four of these salvoes, and at each a sort of buzz went through the whole mass of the troops, a sort of murmur of horror. Since that time we have had execution parades once or twice a week, and such is the force of habit we now think little of them."

Narrative of the Indian Revolt,
Page 36.

How in Peshawar and in its neighbouring places the revolutionaries or those suspected of revolution were tortured and killed is described by a historian as below :—

"Though I have plenty of letters with me describing the terrible and cruel tortures committed by our officers, I do not write a word about it, so that this subject should be no longer before the world".

Kaye's Sepoy War, book vi. chap. iv.

The atrocities committed by the British soldiers during their march from Ambala to Delhi were no less brutal than those of General Neil. On the way numerous innocent pedestrians were killed, merely on suspicion of their association with Delhi Revolutionaries. Besides to revive the lost British prestige, in hundreds of villages, thousands of innocent villagers were severely tortured to death, thei har from their heads were snatched one by one, their bodies were speared and ultimately before death beef was forcibly thrusted through the spears in their mouths. After such terrible tortures they were hanged to deaths.

How on their march from Allahabad to Cawnpore the British armies, under General Havelock and Major Renaud, treated the people is described by an English Historian, Sir Charles Dilke, in his book Greater Britain as below:—

"........letters which reached home in 1857, in which an officer in high command during the march upon Cawnpore,

reported, 'good bag today, polished off rebels,' it being borne in mind that the 'rebels' thus hanged or blown from guns were not taken in arms but villagers apprehended 'on suspicion'. During this march atrocities were committed in the burning of villages and massacre of innocent inhabitants at which Mohammad Tuglak himself would have stood ashamed, How General Havelock behaved after entering Cawnpore is written by Charles Ball as follows:—

"General Havelock began to wreak a terrible vengeance for the death of Sir Hugh Wheeler. Batch upon batch of natives mounted the scaffold. The calmness of mind and nobility of demeanour which some of the revolutionaries showed at the time of death was such as would do credit to those who martyred themselves for devotion to a principle."

Charles Ball's Indian Muttny, vol. I. p. 388.

First the British and Sikh soldiers were ordered to plunder the city and then the business of hanging was started. The most insulting was the event of forcing the Brahmins to lick with their tongues a blood-stained spot which was suspected to be tainted with the blood of the English ladies, alleged to have been murdered by Revolutionaries. The object of this heinous act is described by one English Historian as below:—

"I know that the act of touching Feringhi blood and washing it with a sweeper's broom degrades a high caste Hindoo from his religion. Not only this but I make them do it because I know it. We could not wreak a true revenge unless we trample all their religious instincts under foot, before we hang them, so that they may not have the satisfaction of dying as Hindoos.".........Ibid.

Some outrages which were committed after the siege of Delhi by the soldiers of the company may also be mentioned.

"After the siege was over, the outrages committed by our army are simply heart-rending. A wholesale vengeance is being taken without distinction of friend and foe. As regards the looting, we have indeed surpassed Nadirshah !"

Lord Elphinstone wrote the above in his letter to Lord Lawrence.

Again Lord Montgomery Martin writes :—

"All the city people found within the walls, when our troops entered, were bayonetted on the spot ; and the number was considerable, as you may suppose, when I tell you that in some houses forty or fifty persons were hiding. These were not mutineers, but residents of the city, who trusted to our well-known mild rule for pardon. I am glad to say they were disappointed."

How Hindus and Muslims before being put to death were defiled writes Russell :—

"...........sewing Mohammedans in pig-skins, smearing them with pork-fat before execution and burning their bodies, and forcing Hindus to defile themselves."

Forbes-Mitchell in his Reminiscenes writes the Muslim Nawab of Farrukhabad was rubbed with lard on his whole body before he was hanged.

Out of the numerous instances of the cruel tortures inflicted on the people before killing them which are narrated in his book by Russell only one we give below :—

"Some of the Sepoys were still alive and they were mercifully killed ; but one of their number was dragged out to the sandy plain outside the house ; he was pulled by his legs to a convenient place, where he was held down, pricked in the face and body by the bayonets of some of the soldiery, while others collected fuel for a small pyre, and when everything was ready—the man was roasted alive. These were Englishmen, and more than one officer saw it ; no one offered to interfere ! The horrors of this infernal cruelty were aggravated by the attempt of the miserable wretch to escape when half burnt to death. By a sudden effort he leaped away and, with flesh of his body hanging from his bones, ran for a few yards where he was caught, brought back, put on the fire again. and held there by bayonets, till his remains were consumed"

On the otherhand the Indian revolutionary leaders were not only considerate but kind and liberal in their treatment towards the British. Its testimony is found from various writings of the British themselves. Here only one quotation will suffice. Forrest writes that the Leaders of Oudh through a statement ordered their followers, "Mind that your movement may not be blemished by the murders of women and children." Quite contrary to it what deeds were performed by General Neil. Cooper, Havelock and Hudson about whom Lord Canning himself said in his council on the 24th December 1857 :-

"Not only small and big culprits but even such persons whose guilt was extremely doubtful were hanged without any discrimination. Generally villages were burnt and plundered. Like this guilty and innocent men and women, young and old, all were punished without any distinction."

CHAPTER III

DIVIDE AND RULE

After 1857 majority of the English statesmen began to realise very strongly that the crushing of the feelings of

nationalism in the hearts of the Indians and not letting them be revived again was necessary for the existence of the British Empire in India. For this, propagation of Christianity and of English Education were sought as the means:—

William Edwards, who was in the service of the company during the days of the revolution of 1857 and subsequently was the judge of the Agra High Court, expressed:—

" We are, and ever must be, regarded as foreign invaders and conquerors, our best safeguard is in the evangelization of the country;—Christian settlements scattered about the country would be as towers of strength for many years to come, for they must be loyal as long as the mass of the people remain either idolaters or Mohammedans. But in the strange circumstances of India the effort of converting people to Christianity neither could be persued for long nor could it be openly adopted as a part of the Government policy. The crux of the British policy of the Indian administration has been "Divide and Rule." It is confirmed by numerous documentary evidence. We give below some such authentic extracts:—

" Divide et impera should be the motto of our Indian administration, whether political, civil, or military." Carnatus in the Asiatic Journal, May 1821.

"...... the prejudices of sects and religions by which we have hitherto kept the country—Mussalmans against Hindoos, and so on; " Major-General Sir Lionel Smith, K.C.B., before the Enquiry Committee of 1831.

It was experienced during the Revolution of 1857, that Hindus and Muslims jointly opposed and fought against the company rule and the revolutionary armies were led under common leadership. There was no feeling of Hindu and Muslim as against each other. Hence the British laid very great stress on the policy of playing Hindus and Muslims against each other.

In beetween 1858–1884, the Musalman was a suspect crowd. He was hunted, harassed and crushed all along the line. It was about this time, or, to be particular in 1884, that the Indian National Congress was founded largely under Government patronage. Its early themes were absolutely innocuous. But they later tended to be slightly critical of Government policies. Besides, the Hindu who had so far been the "favourite wife," was taking a leading part in its deliberations. And the Muslim too was graviting towards the Congress. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, the father of Muslim revivalism, and Muslim leaders like Allama Shibli Numani, Mr. Badruddin Tyabji, the Hon'ble Mir Humayun Jah, divines like Mulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, Maulvi Lutfullah of

Aligarh, Mulla Mohammed Murad of Muzaffarnagar, in short, the elite of the then Muslim intelligentsia, advocated a common programme with the Hindus. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was enamoured of the Bengali Hindus of his time. He often said that they were the only section of the people of India of whom "we could legitimately be proud" and it was due to them that "ideals of liberty and nationalism could progress in our country."

These tendencies were deemed disturbing and demanded a reversing of the gear. Hence it was resolved that hereafter it was the Muslim who should be the "favourite wife". The idea was to prevent Hindu-Muslim fusion and the evolution of a common Indian nationhood. Divide et impera is as old as imperialism itself. But the one man who set the ball rolling in India was Mr. Beck, the English Principal of the M.A.O. College, Aligarh. Mr. Beck, tried hard to wean Sir Syed from the Congress. He opened before the latter vistas of Anglo-Muslim rapprochement. The old man fell for the bait. Mr. Beck took the editorial control of the Institute Gazette which Sir Syed had been conducting for years., and reversed its policy. The Institute Gazette, thereafter, began to call the demands of the Congress as "Anti-Muslim". This started a controversy with the Bengal Press, which attacked Sir Syed, believing him to be the author of the articles appearing in the Gazette.

In 1889, Charles Bradlaugh introduced a Bill in Parliament with the object of introducing democracy in India. Mr. Beck was alarmed. He prepared, on behalf of Indian Muslims, a memorial wherein he opposed the Bill on the plea that the introduction of democracy was unsuitable to India, which was not a single nation. He obtained 20,735 singatures to the memorial for which purpose he made full use of his students.

Three years later, i. e. in 1893, he helped to found a Muslim organisation, the Mahommedan Anglo Oriental Defence Association, whose objects were (1) to acquaint Englishmen in general and the Government in particular with the views of the Muslim community and to protect the political rights of the Muslims ; (2) to support measures that would strengthen British Rule in India ; (3) to spread feelings of loyalty among the people ; and (4) to prevent the spread of political agitation among the Muslims, Mr. Beck was the Secretary. The Association strongly resisted the Congress opposition to the forward policy in the N. W. F. Province.

Mr. Beck, not satisfied with what he had been doing in India, wrote an article in an English journal wherein he observed that "the past few years have witnessed the growth of two agitations in India, one, the Indian National Congress ;

the other the movement against cow-slaughter. The former is directed against the English, the latter against the Muslims. It is imperative for the Muflims and the British to unite with a view to fighting these agitators and prevent the introduction of a democratic form of Government unsuited as it is to the needs and genius of the country. We, therefore, advocate loyalty to the Government and Anglo-Muslim collaboration."

So, "the unsuitability of the Indian genius, for democratic forms of Government," made much use of lately is the discovery of an English pedagogue. Mr. Beck dominated Muslim politics for seven years. Throughout he worked mostly behind the cover of Sir Syed.

Mr. Beck died in 1899 and was followed by Mr. Theodore Morrison. In 1905, Mr, Morrison was followed by Mr. Archbold.

These were the times when the Minto-Morley Reforms were in the air. Mr. Archbold wrote a letter to Nawab Muhsin-ul-Mulk on August 10, 1906 wherein he advocated the idea of a deputation to the Viceroy and elaborated its entire details. In his letter he said :

"Cononel Dunlop Smith, Private Secretary of his Excellency the Viceroy informs me that his Excellency is agreeable to receive the Muslim deputation. He advises that a formal letter requesting permission to wait on his Excellency be sent to him. In this connection I would like to make a few suggestions. The formal letter should be sent with the signatures of some representative Musalmans. The deputation should consist of the representatives of all the provinces. The third point to be considered is the text of the address. I would here suggest that we begin with a solemn expression of loyalty. The Government decision to take a step in the direction of self-Government should be appreciated. But our apprehension should be expressed that the principle of election, if introduced would prove detrimental to the interest of the Muslim minority. It should respectfully be suggested that nomination or representation by religion be introduced to meet Muslim opinion. Personally, I think it will be wise of the Muslims to support nomination as the time to experiment with elections has not yet come. In election it will be very difficult for the Muslims to secure their due share. But in all these views I must be in the back-ground. They Must come from you.

I can prepare for you the draft of the address or revise it. Please remember that if we want to organise a powerful movement in the short time at our disposal we must expedite matters."

After the Viceroy was satisfied that the proposed deputat tion will in no way be critical of the Government he permitted

it to wait upon him. H. H. the Aga Khan headed it. The address "on behalf of the Muslims of India" is believed to have been drafted by Mr. Archbold, and what a masterly reply Lord Minto gave !

"The pith of your address, as I understand it," summed up Lord Minto, "is a claim that any system of representation, whether it affects a Municipality or a District Board or a Legislative Council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation, the Muslim community should be represented as a community. You point out that in many cases electoral bodies, as now constituted, cannot be expected to return a Muslim candidate, and if by any chance they did so, it would only be at the sacrifice of such candidate's views to those of a majority opposed to his community, whom he would in no way represent; and you justly claim that your proposition should be estimated not on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of the community and the services it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you."

Communal electorates were incorporated into the Morley-Minto Reforms with great haste and, as expected, played the thin end of the wedge that was to widen the gulf between Hindus and Muslims. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in his "Awakening of India" has observed that "It was officialdom which was responsible for the demand as well as the actual introduction of separate electorates." Lord Morley, the then Secretary of State for India, was for joint electorates with reservation of seats. He later declared that it was the Viceroy who first started the Muslim hare with his early speech about their extra claim.

Thus the communal feelings of the Hindus and Muslims, so very dextrously created by the British Government in India, have helped the Government to strengthen their hold on India and are today being exploited to represent communal differences and disharmony. It is now evident that it is the British Policy which is responsible for all communal differences and strifes among Hindus and Muslims.

To sum up this knotty problem we quote below Gandhiji himself. He replying a press correspondent on Hindu-Muslim Unity in June 1942, said :—

"Time is a merciless enemy, if it is also a merciful friend and healer. I claim to be amongst the oldest lovers of Hindu-Muslim unity and I remain one even today. I have been asking myself why every whole-hearted attempt made by all including myself to reach unity has failed, and failed so completely that I have entirely fallen from grace and am described by some Muslim papers as the greatest enemy of

Islam in India. It is a phenomenon I can only account for by the fact that the third power, even without deliberately wishing it, will not allow real unity to take place. Therefore, I have come to the reluctant conclusion that the two communities will come together almost immediately after the British power comes to a final end in India. If independence is the immediate goal of the Congress and the League then, without needing to come to any terms, all will fight together to be free from bondage."

CHAPTER IV

PUNJAB MARTIAL LAW AND OTHER EVENTS.

Early in 1919 the two Rowlett Bills made their appearance. One was a temporary measure intended to deal with the situation arising from the expiry of the defence of India Act. It was framed to enable anarchical offences to be tried expeditiously by a special court of three High Court judges with no right to appeal in areas where offences of a revolutionary character were prevalent. Besides the Government was given wide powers under it to deal with revolutionary crimes. The second bill was meant to cause permanent change in the law of the land. The possession of seditious document with the intention to publish or circulate it, was to be made punishable with imprisonment. The first was passed in the third week of March 1919 while the second was dropped. Gandhiji notified his intention of meeting the situation with Satyagrah campaign, if the Rowlett recommendations were embodied into bills. Hence Gandhiji inaugurated his movement. The 30th of March 1919 was fixed to be a day of Hartal, a day of fasting, prayer aod penance and for public meetings all over India. The date was changed to 6th April but as the change was not notified in Delhi in time, so procession and Hartal were held in Delhi and the Government resorted to shooting there. At the Delhi Railway station a scuffle arose ending in shooting causing five deaths and a score or so of casualties. The demonstrations on 6th April were held on a country wide scale.

Hindu-Muslim unity was the watchword of processions indicated both by cries and by banners. Hindu leaders had actually been allowed to preach from the pulpit of a mosque.

Sir Michael O 'Dwyer, was determined to prevent the contamination of the Punjab by the spread of the Congress movement, and it was a tussle between him and the Congress as to whether the Congress which was invited to Amritsar in 1919, should be held in the Punjab. Dr. Kitchlew, an advocate, and Dr. Satyapal, a medical practitioner, who were organising

the Congress, were sent for by the District Magistrate of Amritsar to his house one fine morning (10-4-1919) and were spirited away to some unknown place. The report soon spread far and wide, and crowds of people gathered together and wanted to meet the District Magistrate to ask for their whereabouts. They were prevented by military pickets posted at the level crossing, between the city and the Civil Lines, from marching to the Civil Lines, and of course the story of the never failing brick-bat now comes in. The crowd was fired upon, and there were several casualties with one or two deaths. The crowd turned back into the city carrying their victims in procession, and on their way set fire to the National Bank buildings and killed its European manager. Altogether the mob violence was responsible for the deaths of five Englishmen and for the destruction by fire of a Bank, a Railway goods-shed and some other public buildings. Naturally, the officers of the place took umbrage at the events and vowed red-vengeance. The town was made over by the Civil to the Military authorities on the 10th April on the initiative of local officials and in anticipation of sanction from the higher authorities. The behaviour of the masses was not less reprehensible at Gujaranwala and Kasur.

At Gujaranwala and Kasur there was serious violence. At the latter place, on April 12th, crowds did considerable damage to the railway station, burnt a small oil shed, damaged signal and telegraph wires, attacked a train in in which were some Europeans and beat two soldiers to death, a branch post-office was looted, the main post-office burnt, the Munsiff's Court set on fire, and other damage done. That is the official version summarised. The popular version alleges previous provocation of the crowd.

At Gujaranwala, on April 14th, crowds surrounded and stoned a train, burnt a small railway bridge and fired another railway bridge where a calf had been killed by the police, as alleged, and hung up on the bridge as an insult to Hindus, to whom the cow is sacred. The telegraph-office and railway station were subsequently set on fire, as well as the Dak Bungalow, Kutcheri (Collector's office), a church, a school, and a railway shed.

These were the chief incidents. There were minor outbreaks elsewhere in smaller places, such as stoning of trains, cutting of wires, and setting fire to railway stations.

In the meantime there were sporadic outbreaks of violence in different part of the country. In Lahore shootings and reprisals took place. Bad news came from far off Calcutta. Hearing of the trouble in the Punjab, and on the invitation of Dr. Satyapal and Swami Shraddhananda, Gandhi started

for Delhi on the 8th April. On his way however he was served with an order not to enter the Punjab or Delhi, and on his refusal to obey the order he was arrested and turned back from a way-side railway station, Palwal, by a special train to Bombay on the 10 April.

The news of the arrest created disturbances in Ahmedabad where some English and Indian officers were killed. Viramgam and Nadiad were also the scenes of some trouble on the 12th April. In Calcutta likewise, the result of the disturbances was that five or six men were killed and twelve others were wounded due to firing. Gandhi after reaching Bombay helped in calming the populace and proceeded to Ahmedabad where his presence was helpful in restoring quiet. On account of these disturbances, he issued a statement suspending Satyagrah.

While matters stood thus, tragic events were fast developing in Amritsar. It may be noted that Martial Law was not declared as yet on the 13th April, though as the Government Report admits, de facto Martial Law was in force since the 10th April. As a matter of fact, Martial Law was formally proclaimed in Lahore and Amritsar on the 15th April, and shortly after in two or three other districts. On the 13th April, which was the Hindu New Year's Day, a large public meeting was advertised and held in the Jallianwala Bagh, which is an open ground in the midst of the city enclosed with walls which form the boundaries of houses overlooking it. It has a bottleneck that forms the only entrance to it, and so narrow that a carriage cannot pass through it. When twenty thousand people,—men, women, and children,—gathered at the Bagh, General Dyer entered the place at the head of a force composed of 100 Indian troops and 50 British, while one Hansraj was lecturing to the audience, and gave orders forthwith to fire. His own version as given later before the Hunter Commission was that he ordered the people to disperse and then fired, but he admitted that he fired within two or three minutes of the order. In any case, it was obvious that 20,000 people could not disperse in two or three minutes especially through that narrow outlet, and when 1,600 rounds where fired, and the firing stopped only when the ammunition had run out, the casualties were, even according to Government's version, about 400 dead, while the wounded were estimated at between a thousand and two. The firing was done by the Indian troops, behind whom were placed the British troops, all on an elevated platform in the Bagh. The greater tragedy really was that the dead and dying were left to suffer the whole night without water to drink, or medical attendance or aid of any character. Dyer's

contension—as it came out later—was that "the city having passed under the Military, he had tomtomed in the morning that no gatherings would be permitted and as the people openly defied him, he wanted to teach them a lesson so that they might not laugh at him. He would have fired, and fired longer, he said, if he had the required ammunition. He had only fired 1,600 rounds because his ammunition had run out." "As a matter of fact," he said," he had taken an armoured car but found that the passage to the Bagh would not admit it, and so he left it behind."

General Dyer's regime witnessed some unthinkable punishments. The water supply and the electric supply of Amritsar were cut off. Public flogging was common. But the 'crawling order' surpassed the rest of his achievements. A missionary lady doctor named Miss Sherwood had been attacked while she was cycling in a lane by the people and every one passing through the lane was ordered to crawl with belly to the ground. And all who lived in the street had to obey this order, despite the fact that Miss Sherwood was protected in that very lane by decent citizens. The incident became an object of marriment and joking at the hand of Quarter-Master-General Hudson in the Imperial Legislative Council.

The issue of third class tickets on the railway was prohibited, which involved a general suspension of travelling by the Indian public. More than two persons were prohibited from marching on side-walks or pavements. Bicycles, "other than those owned by Europeans," were commandeered. People who had closed their shops were forced to open them, under severe penalties. Prices of commodities were fixed by military officers, carts were commandeered. A public platform for whippings was erected near the fort, and a number of triangles for floggings were erected in various parts of the city.

Let us now give some figures of the cases dealt with by the Tribunal at Amritsar. On major charges 298 people were put before the Martial Law Commissioners, who tried cases unfettered by the ordinary recognised rules of procedure or laws of evidence. Of these 218 were convicted, 51 were sentenced to death, 46 to transportation for life, 2 to imprisonment for ten years, 79 for seven years, 10 for five years, 13 for three years and 11 for lesser periods. This does not take account of the cases dealt with summarily by military officers, numbering 60 persons, of whom 50 were convicted, and 105 persons convicted under Martial Law by Civil Magistrates.

In answer to a question by Justice Rankin, a Member of

the Hunter Committee who asked, "Excuse me putting it in this way, General, but was it not a form of frightfulness ?", General Dyer replied :

"No, It was not. It was a horrible duty I had to perform. I think it was a merciful thing. I thought that I should shoot well and shoot strong, so that I or anybody else, should not have to shoot again. I think it is quite possible I could have dispersed the crowd without firing, but they would have come back again and laughed, and I should have made what I consider to be a fool of myself."

And General Dyer's action was immediately approved by Sir Michael O'Dwyer in a telegram sent to him with Sir Michael's approval : "Your action correct, Lieutenant Governor approves."

All these facts are admissions made by General Dyer before the Hunter Commission in the early part of 1920. The full facts however were quite unknown for a year after the event, even the bare news being unknown at the time, and for months together later. The censoring of news was so strict and the ingress and egress of people to and from the Punjab was so rigidly regulated, that the All-India Congress Committee learnt, in any detail, the news of the Amritsar tragedy only when it was broken to it in July 1919 in Calcutta (at one of its meetings held at the Law Association chamber), not only with bated breath and in whispering tones but with the charge that it should be kept strictly confidential. The tragedy of the Punjab was not confined only to Amritsar, Lahore, Gujaranwala, Kasur and other places shared the scenes of confusion and carnage and the gruesome details of the events and the atrocities, the barbarities and inhuman acts perpetrated by Col. Johnson, Bosworth-Smith, Col. O'Brien and other officers, both Civil and Military, are really blood-curdling.

According to the official Report contained in the White paper issued to Parliament, the administration of Martial Law was 'more intensive' in Lahore than elsewhere.* The Curfew order, of course, was immediately put in force and people out after 8 P. M. were liable to be shot, flogged, fined, or imprisoned or otherwise punished. Those whose shops were closed were ordered to open them; the alternatives were either being shot or have the shops publicly opened and their contents distributed free to the public.

"Lawyers' agents and touts" were ordered to be registered and forbidden to leave the city without permit. Occupiers of premises on whose walls Martial Law notices were posted

*This and the succeeding accounts are taken from Amritsar, by B. G. Horniman.

were ordered to protect them and were liable to punishment if in any way they were defaced or torn, although they could not stay out at night to watch them. More than two persons abreast were not allowed on the side-walks. Students of colleges were ordered to report themselves four times a day to the military authorities at varying places of assembly. Langars or public food kitchens, which had been opened by philanthropic persons for the feeding of those who could not purchase food were ordered to be closed ; motor cars and motor bicycles belonging to Indians were ordered to be delivered up to the military authorities and were handed over to officials for their use. Electric punkas and other electric fittings belonging to Indians were commandeered and stripped from the houses for the use of British soldiers. Public conveyances were ordered to report themselves daily at places a considerable distance from the city. There was one case of an elderly man who was caught tending his cow outside his shop door in a side lane after 8 p. m. He was seized and flogged for the breach of the Curfew order. Drivers of tongas (hackney carriages) had participated in the hartal. To teach them a lesson, 300 tongas were commandeered. Of those who were permitted to ply for hire, orders to report themselves at certain times at places distant from the busy parts of the city, and their detention at the pleasure of the military officials concerned, effectually destroyed their chances of a day's earnings. Colonel Johnson admitted that many of his orders were directed against the educated and professional classes, lawyers etc. He considered they were the classes from which the political agitators were drawn. Professional men and other residents on whose premises Martial Law orders were posted had to set servants to watch them lest they should be torn or defaced, perhaps by a police agent ; one such case was detected. When they applied for permits for such guardians of the placards to be out after 8 p. m., they were told they could have passes for this purpose for themselves but not for their servants. Students, boys of 16 to 20, were the objects of special attention. The students of several colleges in Lahore, which is a large University town, were ordered to report themselves four times daily at a place, in one case four miles distant from their college. In the burning sun of Lahore in April, the hottest time of the year, when the temperature is often over 108 in the shade, these youths had to walk 19 miles daily. Some of them fainted by the wayside. Colonel Johnson thought it did them good, it kept them out of mischief. A Martial Law notice was torn from one of the walls of one college. The whole professional staff, including the

Principal, were arrested, and marched under military escort to the fort where they were kept in military custody for three days. They were given "a corner in the fort" for their accommodations and allowed to sleep on the roof. The closing of the langars or public kitchens which had been opened by philanthropic persons, was explained by Colonel Johnson on the ground that they were used for seditious propaganda. Under cross examination he could produce no justification for this assertion. He had no evidence and he could not say who gave him the information.

The headman (a person of high status in the village) was tied to a tree and publicly flogged for his own punishment and the edification of the village. There was apparently no court or pretence of judicial procedure, summary or otherwise. There was only summary flogging.

Colonel Johnson, however, was quite pleased with what he did in this respect, and the Europeans of Lahore entertained him at a farewell dinner and lauded him as the "protector of the poor"—the poor people who suffered a six week's agony under his rule. Colonel O'Brien who administered Martial Law in Gujaranwala, Captain Doveton who had charge of Kasur, and Mr. Bosworth Smith, a Civilian officer who was in command at Sheikhupura, particularly distinguished themselves.

Regarding the bombing at Gujaranwala, the public are asked to believe that this promiscuous dropping of bombs and the firing of altogether 255 rounds of a machine-gun, apparently at close quarters, into crowds of people, resulted in the killing of nine and wounding of only about sixteen people.

Colonel O'Brien in his evidence before the Committee said the crowd was fired on "wherever found". This was referring to the aeroplanes. Once it was "found" by an aeroplane in charge of Lieut. Dodkins R.A.R, in the form of twenty peasants in a field. Lieut. Dodkins said, he machine-gunned them till they fled. He saw another party in front of a house being addressed by a man, so he dropped a bomb on them because he "had no doubt in his mind that they were not a marriage or funeral party." Major Carbey R.A.F. was the gentleman who bombed a party of people because he thought they were rioters going or coming from the city. Major Carbey's state of mind may be gathered from some further extracts from the report of his evidence.

"The crowd was running away and he fired to disperse them. As the crowd dispersed, he fired the machine-gun into the village itself. He supposed some shots hit the houses. He could make no discrimination between the innocent and

the guilty. He was at a height of 200 feet and could see perfectly what he was doing. His object was not accomplished by the dropping of bombs alone."

"The firing was not intended to do damage alone. It was in the interests of the villagers themselves. By killing a few, he thought he would prevent the people from collecting again. This had a moral effect."

"After that he went over the city, dropping bombs, and fired at the people who were trying to get away."

Gujaranwala, Kasur, and Sheikhupura, like Amritsar and Lahore, had their Curfew order, prohibition of travelling for Indians, floggings public and private, wholesale arrests and punishments by Summary Courts and Special Tribunals

Colonel O'Brien was responsible for an order that when Indians met British officers they must salute, alight from their carriages, or dismount if they were riding or driving, and lower their umbrellas if they were carrying any This order Colonel O'Brien told the Committee, "was good by way of bringing home to the people that they had new masters." People were whipped, fined, and otherwise punished for disobedience of this monstrous order. He was responsible for the arrest of numbers of people, who were kept in gaol for as long as six weeks without being brought to trial. In one case a number of leading citizens were summarily arrested, put in a goods-truck, where they were huddled together after being marched several miles in the burning sun, some of them half-clad, and sent by train to Lahore. They were refused permission to answer the calls of nature, and were kept in the truck in these conditions for about forty-four hours. Their horrible plight hardly needs description. As they were marched through the streets, an ever-growing crowd of prisoners,—for Colonel O'Brien went on making arrests indiscriminately as he proceeded,—they were handcuffed and chained together. Hindus and Muslims were chained together. This was regarded by the populace as a jibe at Hindu-Muslim unity. Colonel O'Brien said it was accidental. As an example of the spirit of the whole proceeding, it may be mentioned that one of the victims, an elderly citizen, was a noted benefactor of the town, who gave a lakh of rupees (£. 10,000) to found the King George School in commemoration of the King's visit, and had contributed largely to War Relief Fund and War Loans.

Another example of Colonel O'Brien's method is the arrest of an elderly farmer, as a hostage for his two sons, whom he was unable to produce. Colonel O'Brien ordered this man's property to be confiscated, and issued a warning that anybody attempting to help him with his crops would be

shot. He admitted the man had committed no offence himself, but "he did not say where his sons were."

These are only incidents in Colonel O'Briens lengthy record. Two hundred persons were convicted by Summary Courts, and received sentences of whipping, or from one month up to two years' imprisonment. The Commission convicted 149 people, of whom 22 were sentenced to death, 108 to transportation for life, and others to sentences varying from ten years downwards. Colonel O'Brien's final achievement was to rush a large batch of cases through in about twenty-four hours, when he heard that Martial Law was to terminate the next day. The people concerned were given little opportunity of defending themselves, and cases fixed for some days ahead were rushed into the Court post-haste, so anxious was Colonel O'Brien that none should escape his justice by reason of the lapse of Martial Law.

Captain Doveton was in a sort of independent command in the Kasur sub-division, the headquarters of which is the fairly large town of Kasur. At this place a public gallows was erected for hangings, though apparently it was never used, and was taken down by order of the superior authorities. It was there, however, for some days to the terror of the inhabitants. A large public cage was also erected near the railway station, designed to accommodate 150 persons, and here suspects were incarcerated before the public gaze. The whole male population of the town was paraded for identification.

Floggings took place in public, and photographic records of these disgusting incidents are in existence, showing that the victims were stripped naked to the knees, and tied to telegraph poles or triangles. Publicity was not casual, or accidental, but designed. A sort of levee of the 'Bad characters' of the town was held for the purpose by Captain Doveton's order, and on at least one occasion prostitutes were brought to witness the floggings. Just as Colonel Johnson had his 'one regrettable incident,' when a wedding party was flogged, this flogging in the presence of prostitutes was the one thing which seemed to excite Captain Doveton's shame when he was taxed with it, while giving evidence before the Hunter Committee. His explanation was that he had ordered the Sub-Inspector of Police to round up the bad characters, and bring them to witness the floggings, but was 'horrified' when he saw these women there. But he could not send them away because he was unable to find an escort for them. So they remained to witness the floggings.

Captain Doveton was a prolific inventor of 'minor punishments.' His sole object in inventing minor punishments, he

told the Committee, was to make things, "as mild as circumstances would permit." Offenders against Martial Law were set to work at loading and unloading goods waggons in the station yard. He instituted a system of making people touch the ground with their foreheads,.........a sort of variation of Colonel Dyer's crawling order.

Mr. Bosworth-Smith was a civilian officer who administered Martial Law in the sub-division of Sheikhupura. He admitted that Martial Law was not 'essential', but he thought it was 'desirable' and keeping it on was 'a good thing.' He tried all the cases in his area, and, as elsewhere, sentences of flogging were inflicted, which were carried out at the rising of the Court. He tried 477 persons between May 6 and May 20.

An order was issued by the military authorities compelling schoolboys to parade three times a day to salute the flag. The order applied to the infant classes and children of five and six years of age were included. It is actually alleged that there were fatal cases of sun-stroke resulting from this, and it is admitted that children fainted from undue exposure to the sun. It is alleged too, that in some instances the boys were made to repeat: "I have committed no offence. I will not commit any offence. I repent, I repent, I repent."

"Major Smith, Administrator of Martial Law in Gujaranwala, Gujrat, and Lyallpur, was asked by Sir Chimanlal Setalvad whether the order was enforced in all places in his area and whether it applied to all classes including infant-classes. The Major replied that it applied to all places in his area where there were troops, and that even infant-class boys of the ages of five and six were required to attend the parade, but the little boys were exempted from the evening parade.

Colonel O'Brien, in his evidence, said that "one day when he was at Wazirabad, he saw a boy fainting during his march to the flag, and wrote to the military authorities." He did not know if the next day this duty was increased from two to three times. Questioned, if it was so done, would it not be hard on the boys, Colonel O'Brien said, 'No'.

Thus Indian manhood and womanhood were humiliated and insulted to such an extent that human blood begins to boil.

CHAPTER V

SALT SATYAGRAH MOVEMENT 1930-31

The N. C. O. Movement of 1920 was stopped by Gandhiji at a moment when it was heading towards a mass movement and Gandhiji feared some violent outbursts as its consequence. But the great movement inaugurated in 1930 was in a nature of a mass movement from its very start.

The Government also started with its strong repressive

policy from the very beginning. The short account of which we give below :—

"On 26th January 1930 the Independence Day celebrations were a great success, being held all over the country. Arrests were going on briskly in India for one reason or another. In the Meerut Case, of the 32 accused, all but one were committed to trial in the sessions. In Calcutta, Subash Chandra Bose and eleven others were convicted and sentenced to a year's rigorous imprisonment. In obedience to the Congress mandate, 172 members of the Legislatures had resigned by February, 1930. The Working Committee met at Sabarmati on the 14th, 15th and 16th February. The cardinal resolution of the sitting was the one relating to Civil Disobedience. The resolution authorised, Gandhi and his followers in faith, to start Civil Disobedience. This was generalized later by the All-India Congress Committee, that met shortly after at Ahmedabad, into a campaign of Civil Disobedience. Shortly after this meeting, the atmosphere was surcharged with salt.

There was no privacy about the plans. But they were not clear-cut either. They would unfold themselves, much as the path on a misty morning reveals itself to a fast-moving motor car, almost from yard to yard. The Satyagrahi carries a searchlight on his forehead. It shows the way for the next step. The present Salt Satyagraha was to evolve thus. Gandhi would go and pick up salt in some salt area. Others should not.

In the event of mass action, the lawyers were to give up their courts and the students to give up their studies.

Gandhi's plans have all along been revealed to him by his own instinct, not evolved by the cold, calculating logic of the mind. His inner voice is his mentor and monitor, his friend, philosopher and guide. It was thus that he condensed the progress of centuries in a decade. As is usual with him, he sent a letter to Lord Irwin. Lord Irwin's answer to the letter of Gandhi,—which people and the Press described as an ultimatum,—came back quick and was unequivocal. His Excellency expressed his regret that Mr. Gandhi should have been "contemplating a course of action which was clearly bound to involve violation of the Law and danger to the public peace." Gandhi's rejoinder to this was characteristic of him. "On bended knees," he wrote, "I asked for bread and received a stone instead. The English Nation responds only to force, and I am not surprised by the Viceregal reply. The only public peace the Nation knows is the peace of the public prison. India is a vast prison-house. I repudiate this (British) Law and regard it as my sacred duty to break the mournful monotony of compulsory peace that is choking the heart of the Nation for want of free vent.".

Gandhi's march had thus become inevitable. Vallabhbhai went before his master, to prime up the villagers for the coming ordeals. It did not take long for Government to strike the first blow. When Vallabhbhai was moving in advance as Gandhi's forerunner, Government saw in him John the Baptist that was the forerunner of Jesus, nineteen hundred years ago, and forthwith they laid hands on him in the first week of March at Ras and sentenced him to three month's imprisonment. With his arrest and conviction, the whole of Gujarat rose to a man against Government. 75,000 people gathered on the sands of Sabarmati and passed the following resolution :—

"We the citizens of Ahmedabad, determine hereby that we shall go the same path where Vallabhbhai has gone, and we shall attain full Independence while attempting to do so. Without achieving freedom for our country, we shall not rest in peace, nor will we give Government peace. We solemnly declare that India's emancipation lies in truth and non-violence."

Gandhi began his march on 12.3.1930 to Dandi, accompanied by his seventy-nine 'padacharees.' Crowds gathered everywhere to witness the march and pay homage to the great deliverer. Gandhi said, "The British rule in India has brought about moral, material, cultural and spiritual ruination of this great country. I regard this rule as a curse. I am out to destroy this system of Government. I have sung the tune of 'God Save the King' and have taught others to sing it. I was a believer in the politics of petitions, deputations, and friendly negotiations. But all these have gone to dogs. I know that these are not the ways to bring this Government round. Sedition has become my religion. Ours is a non-violent battle. We are not out to kill any body but it is our dharma to see that the curse of this Government is blotted out."

Gandhiji's march lasted 24 days, and all along he was emphasising how the march was a pilgrimage the merit of which lay in keeping the body and soul together and not in feting and feasting. He was constantly turning the torch inward.

Gandhi reached Dandi on the morning of the 5th April. Shrimati Sarojini Devi had also gone there to see him. Soon after the morning prayers, Gandhi and his volunteers proceeded to break the Salt Law by picking up the salt lying on the sea-shore. Immediately after breaking the Salt Law, Gandhi issued the following Press statement :—

"Now that the technical or ceremonial breach of the Salt Law has been committed, it is now open to any one who

would take the risk of prosecution under the Salt Law to manufacture salt wherever he wishes, and wherever it is convenient. My advice is that workers should everywhere manufacture salt."

The country was ablaze from end to end, being permitted to start Salt Satyagraha as from the 6th April. Huge public meetings were held in all big cities, the audience running up to six figures. The events at Karachi, Shiroda, Ratnagiri, Patna, Peshawar, Calcutta, Madras and Sholapur, constituted a new experience and bore witness to the violence that lay behind this civilized Government. In Peshawar, the military firing resulted in many deaths. In Madras there was firing too.

Referring to the Karachi tragedy Gandhi wrote :—

"Brave young Dattatraya who is said to have known nothing of Satyagraha and, being an athlete, had merely gone to assist in keeping order, received a fatal bullet wound. Meghraj Revachand, 18 years old, has also succumbed to a bullet wound. Thus did seven men, including Jairamdas, received bullet wounds."

Writing under the title 'Black Regime', Gandhi reviewed the events and said : "If Government neither arrest nor declare salt free, they will find people marching to be shot rather than be tortured."

The Bengal Ordinance was renewed on April 23, and the Viceroy promulgated on the 27th April another Ordinance reviving the powers of the Press Act of 1910, with certain amendments.

Gandhi then drafted his second letter to Viceroy and had also announced his intention of raiding the salt works of Dharsana and Chharsada. Then came the time for the arrest of Gandhi, and it was not until Gandhi was actually removed to Yeravada on the morning of the 5th, that it was known that his arrest had taken place.

It was ten minutes past one in the night when Gandhi was placed in a motor lorry accompanied by policemen. He was then taken to Borivli near Bombay by train and thence by motor car to Yeravada prison.

Gandhi's arrest was followed by spontaneous demonstrations of sympathy from one end of the country to the other. It was the signal for a voluntary and complete hartal in Bombay, Calcutta and several other places. The day after the arrest the hatral was even more widespread. In Bombay, a huge procession was taken out, and a public meeting in the evening had to be addressed from several different platforms. About 40 out of the 80 mills had to be inactive, because over 50,000 men had come out in protest. The workmen of the

4

G. I. P. and the B. B. & C. I. Workshops also came out and joined the hartal. The cloth merchants decided on a six days' hartal to indicate their disapproval of the arrest. In Poona, where Gandhiji was interned, the hartal was complete. Resignations from honorary offices and from the services were announced at frequent intervals. Troubles were brewing at one or two places, though on the whole the country had imbibed Gandhi's teachings rather astonishingly. The disturbances in Sholapur resulting in the burning of six Police Chaukis led to Police firing in which 25 were killed and about a hundred wounded. In Calcutta though the hartal was peaceful in the city, there were disturbances at Howrah where the Police opened fire at Panchanantala to disperse a crowd. Under Section 144, all assemblies of more than five were prohibited. But Gandhi's arrest had a *world-wide* interest.

Mr. Abbas Tyabji who took up Gandhi's place as leader of the Salt Satyagrahis was arrested on the 12th April. Arrests, lathi-charges and repression went on as usual. Batches of volunteers raided the salt depot and used to be beaten with lathis by the Police and many of them suffered severe injuries.

On hearing of Mr. Tyabji's arrest Shrimati Sarojini Devi hurried to Dharasana, in fulfilment of her promise to Gandhi, and continued to direct the raid. She and her batch of volunteers were formally arrested on 16th morning, taken out of the Police cordon and then released. Batches of volunteers rushed later towards the salt depot. They were beaten and chased out. Same evening over 220 volunteers were arrested by the Police on a charge of being members of an unlawful assembly and were detained in the segregation camp at Dharsana.

Later, a large number of volunteers, congregated on the Wadala Salt Works (19th morning). The 'raid' was frustrated by the prompt action of the Police, who, armed with revolvers, arrested over 400 of the Satyagrahis.

More salt raids took place. A mass raid at Dharsana took place on the 21st of May, when 2,500 volunteers from all parts of Gujarat took part in it. They were led by Imam Saheb, the 62 year old colleague of Gandhiji in South Africa. The volunteers commenced the raid early in the morning and as they attacked the salt heaps at different places the Police charged them with lathis (bamboo sticks) and beat them back.

Thousands witnessed the spectacle. After this had gone on for two hours, the leaders, Messrs. Imam Saheb, Pyarelal and Manilal Gandhi were arrested, and later Mrs. Sarojini Naidu also. The total number of injured volunteers on that

day was 290. One injured volunteer, Mr. Bhailalbhai Dajabhai, died, as also Babu Hule from Maharashtra, from the effects of the injuries. The Police with the help of the Military, then practically isolated Dharsana and Untadi by blocking the main road leading to these places and preventing any car or pedestrian from going along it. All the volunteers who were camping at Untadi were taken to some unknown destination and later released.

Two batches of volunteers numbering about 200 were led on the 3rd June from Untadi camp to raid the Dharsana Salt Depots. Both were held up by the Police who, when the crowd entered the prohibited area, charged them with lathis. The injured men were taken to the camp hospital.

Wadala Raids : a succession of raids were also made on the Wadala Salt Depot, On the 22nd, 188 volunteers were arrested and taken to Worli. On the 25th, 100 volunteers were accompanied by a huge crowd of 2,000 spectators. The Police charged them with lathis injuring 17, and later arrested 115. The rest with the crowd got off with the salt. Again a raid was made in the afternoon when 18 more were injured. On the 26th, 65 volunteers were afield and 43 of them were arrested. The rest with the crowd got off with salt. An official Press Note stated that the disturbances that had so far taken place, had been caused largely by the sight-seers who were, unlike the volunteers, not disciplined. The Note warned the public to keep away from Wadala while the raids were in progress.

But the most demonstrative raid was to come off on the 1st June for which the War Council was diligently preparing. On the morning of the 1st nearly 15,000 volunteers and non-volunteers participated in the great mass action at Wadala.

Successive batches marched up to the Port Trust level-crossing and the swelled crowd were held up there by the Police cordon. Soon the raiders, among whom were women and children, broke through the cordon, splashed through slime and mud, and ran over the pans. Congress raiders numbering about 150 were slightly injured. The raiders were repulsed by the Police who were acting under the immediate supervision of the Home Member.

Serious troubles ending in two Police charges and the calling out of the Military to cope with the situation occurred at the Worli Detention Camp on the 3rd June, when about four thousand under-trial Wadala 'Raiders' were involved in a brush with the Police, resulting in about ninety casualties, twenty-five of them being serious.

But the way in which the raiders were dealt with by the Police caused considerable public indignation and protest,

On-lookers were aghast at the gruesome spectacle. Mr. Hussain, ex. Judge, Small Causes Court, Bombay, Mr. K. Natarajan, and Mr. G. K. Devadhar, President, Servants of India Society, who personally watched the Dharsana raid, issued a statement in which they said :—

"They saw with their own eyes that after Satyagrahis were driven out of the Salt boundary, mounted European Sowars rode at full gallop with lathis in their hands beating people between the spot where Satyagrahis had reached for raid and the village itself. They actually galloped full speed through the streets of the village, scattering men, women and children. Villagers ran into bye-lanes and closed themselves in houses. But if, by accident, they were unable to escape, they were beaten with lathis."

Mr. Webb Miller, writing to the New Freeman expressed abhorrence of the sights at Dharsana:—

"In eighteen years of reporting in twenty-two countries, during which I have witnessed innumerable civil disturbances, riots, street fights and rebellions, I have never witnessed such harrowing scenes as at Dharsana. Sometimes the scenes were so painful that I had to turn away momentarily. One surprising feature was the discipline of the volunteers. It seemed they were thoroughly imbued with Gandhi's non-violence creed."

Both in 1930 and 1932 the Sanikatta salt stores in Karnataka under Government Guard were raided by a mass consisting of 10,000 to 15,000 people, and the quantity of salt taken away on each occasion amounted to thousands of maunds.

Mr. George Slocombe, the representative of the Daily Herald, London, was also an eye-witness to some of the Salt raids:—

"I watched the events from an observation post on one of the rocky hills which ring in Wadala. It was humiliating for an Englishman to stand among the ardent, friendly, but deeply moved crowd of volunteers and sympathisers and watch the representatives of the country's administration engaged in this ludicrous, embarrassing business."

The time is past when the progress of events could be described in any circumstantial detail. Lord Irwin began to tighten the screw. At first he would not allow Gandhi to be arrested. Gandhi's march infected the whole Nation. There were marches everywhere. His call to the women of the country brought them into the arena by thousands. They proved a huge big complication to Government. Picketing liquor shops and foreign cloth shops was taken charge of by them, and the Police became powerless until their chivalry

succumbed to their despotism. Not to arrest Gandhi was to leave him free to tap hidden and unthought of resources. He had a magic wand in his hands, one waving of which brought men and money. He had to be arrested but the time was not yet, for Gandhi arrested would mean the whole Nation arrested. On the 14th of April, Jawaharlal had been arrested and convicted, and that meant the arrest of the Congress. It was only a transference from the larger jail to a smaller jail. Ordinances were passed prohibiting picketing, preaching of non-payment of taxes, and social boycott. Numerous skirmishes were waged round the hoisting of the national flag. Punishments soon became severe. Fines were added to imprisonment. Then came the lathi charges. People could hardly believe that the Police were being drilled with lathis and all the exercises cap-a-pie were being practised to charge the Satyagrahis. It was not a threat or a suspicion. It was a grim reality—this lathi charge. Meetings were ordered to be dispersed under the ruling Law of the land, and dispersal was effected under the inexorable blows of the lathis. Salt sections were coupled with the Penal Code and sentences were made as long as possible. Even the best and the biggest men were given "C" Class treatment in jail and set to inhuman labour.

The 'A' class was there only nominally. The 'B' class was given in a niggardly spirit.

The All-India Working Committee of the Congress was declared unlawful and Pandit Motilal Nehru was arrested on the 30th June, 1930, and sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment. To continue the story of repression, we have only to state that its intensity grew with the boycott of Foreign cloth movement. The volunteer organisation in Bombay was thorough going. Women came into the movement, and with their orange robes and delicate frames, won the hearts of the people by the very gentleness of their picketing. When a shop-keeper would not seal his goods, his wife would be brought as a picket. In Bombay, public meetings were prohibited as elsewhere in the country and the people would not obey the orders. We have the testimony of Mr. Brailsford, who had toured the country during the movement, to the brutality of the treatment accorded to the people. He wrote in the course of an article in the Manchester Guardian on 12th January 1931:—

"The charges which responsible Indian leaders make against the Police range in space and time over vast areas which defy investigation. Everywhere one heard complaints about the brutality of the Police in dispersing prohibited meetings. If such meetings had always or usually been

tolerated, there would have been no disorder, and the audiences would soon have grown bored. As it was, especially in Bombay, the policy of rough dispersal moved the whole city to anger ; to face the lathi charges became a point of honour, and in a spirit of martyrdom, volunteers went out in hundreds to be beaten. They gave a display of disciplined, passive courage. Again and again, I heard descriptions by Europeans of the beating of slight and perfectly passive youths by burly constables which made one almost physically sick. I should not care to repeat the comments of a French lady who saw one of these scenes.

"That the Police, even under English officers, often meant to inflict physical punishment for disaffection. I could not doubt. At Calcutta some students, witnessing from a balcony of the University the brutal beating of participants in a peaceful procession shouted 'cowards.' Two hours later, the Police returned rushed, into the University under an English officer, invaded the class-room, and beat the students indiscriminately as they sat at their desks, till the walls were spattered with blood. The University made an official protest, but no punishment followed. I heard details of this affair from professor whose repute in the European scientific world stands high. An Indian Judge of the High Court whose students-son had been beaten spoke with a vehenence which I wish some members of the Government could have heard. A similar affair occurred at Lahore where the Police, again under an English Officer, invaded a college and beat not only students in the class but the professor also. The excuse in this case was that some students belonging, I was assured, to another college had been 'peaceful pickets' in the street. At Contai, in Bengal, five villagers were pushed into a tank and drowned during the dispersal of a crowd which seems to have been harmless. At Meerut, I met a leading lawyer who was the chief speaker at a dispersed meeting. While under arrest he was beaten, and in this position, a policeman shot him at close range, so that his arm had to be amputated. The importance of such affairs (and I might mention many more) was psychological, They helped to discredit the Government during the critical time when the masses were hesitating whether they should unreservedly support Congress. The privations (of which I saw something) suffered by the main body ('C' class) of the political prisoners in jail had the same effect.

"Of Police brutality in the villages of Gujarat, I had ample evidence, for I spent five days, touring them. The legal represson to begin with, was sufficiently harsh. The peasants, almost to a man, in the Bardoli and Kaira districts

were refusing,—from a mixture of motives, personal devotion to Gandhi, desire for Swaraj, and economic distress due to the terrific fall in agricultural prices to pay the land tax. The reply is to confiscate their fields, buffaloes, irrigation pumps, etc., and these are sold at nominal prices, so that for a tax of Rs. 40 or so, a man may lose his all. Further, the usual date of collection was anticipated by three months so that peasants who had already paid the two instalments due for 1930 were required last October to pay the instalment normally due in January, 1931. All this may have been just legal, but it was provocatively severe. On top of it came physical terrorism. The Police armed with rifles and lathis, made a practice of surrounding the disaffected villages and beating the peasants indiscriminately with the lathi or the butt-end of a rifle. I have forty-five narratives given to me personally by the victims, and in all but two cases, I saw their wounds, and bruises (one girl was too modest to show them). Some of these cases were serious; one man had a broken arm, another a thumb-joint cut to the bone, while bodies covered with marks. Other cases which I could not verify were in a distant hospital. The motive was sometimes to extort the tax,—and occasionally it was paid after a beating and the seizure of a buffalo, though, by the normal reckoning, was not yet due. I have the statement of several men who themselves were not tax-payers, but were compelled after a beating, to pay an absent neighbour's tax. In other numerous instances the motive was apparently simply to terrorise a 'disaffected' village, for no attempt was made to get the tax. The national flags in one village were torn down from trees and houses, together with the Congress placards, and eight peasants beaten, apparently because their houses were near these symbols. In two cases, a man was beaten till he removed his Gandhi cap. In another instance, a man was beaten (twelve lathi blows) till he saluted the Police seven times. A frequent Police joke was to say, "Do you want Swaraj? Then, here it is," and down would come the lathi. Worst of all, the Indian officials (both civilian and Police officers) were engaged in an effort to rouse the Parias, classed in the census as a 'criminal tribe' against the yeoman class (Pattidars). There was direct incitement to beat them, to refuse to pay debts, even to burn their houses. For this, I had the evidence of five Barias in different villages. To these people the lands of the small owners were offered at one or two rupees an acre. This was much what the worse type of Russian Communist official did when the party was stirring up class war in the villages.

" 'This' you may say, 'is ex parte evidence.' But I took

such precautions as I could. I gave all my evidence to the higher officials. The Commissioner went with me to one 'sample' village, saw the peasants' injuries, and questioned them. I have not the right to anticipate his mature conclusion, but on the spot he expressed doubts only about one case out of nine (the modest girl). Moreover, I met two of the local Indian officials, and had a chance of observing their ways; one of them in my presence perpetrated an art of wanton physical brutality. Finally, I saw the cage in which he kept his untried prisoners at Borsad. It was an open den, of the zoo type, with iron bars, and measured about thirty feet square. In it, day and night, lived eighteen politicals, and one of them had spent six weeks in it, without books or works. From this crowded cage, the prisoners were let out only once a day, and only for three-quarter of an hour, to wash and visit the latrines. Ought I to have been sceptical, when one of them told me that he and two others had been beaten in gaol? Beating belonged to the same medieval century as this prison.

"May I, in conclusion, touch on the bearing that all this has on the good work of the R.T.C.? English public opinion, carefully screened by Censors and Editors from any perception of what is happening in India, forgets that the great mass of the population is not in a normal state of mind. It has been roused to a high pitch of sustained exaltation, it has been goaded, gentle though it is, to anger, it doubts our sincerity, and, above all, it is passionately devoted to its imprisoned leaders; I gravely fear that in this mood it may not study the proposed Constitution with the favourable attention it deserves. So long, indeed, as Gandhi is in prison, I doubt whether the main body of his movement will abandon, or even slacken, its resistance. The one chance lies in an act of generosity which will proclaim a new era. May one hope that the completion of the sketch of the Constitution, and its acceptance at Westminister will be heralded by a general amnesty? Failing the most tactful handling during the next six months, India may have to start her career of freedom with the repression of Indian by Indians. We ought to know more of the history of this painful year; she should be helped to forget it."

To make a long story short, it only requires to be mentioned that every Province and part of India bore its share of sufferings in the national struggle.

We shall conclude this harrowing tale of woes with an account relating to the heroism of the women of Borsad, on the 21st January 1931, to celebrate one of those periodical events which sprung up in the movement. The Police were

determined to counter the demonstration. The women had placed large pots of water to quench their thirst, at different places. The first thing done by the Police was to break these pots. The women were dispersed by force and the specific allegation was made that, when the ladies were thrown down, the policemen trod upon their chests with their boots. This was almost the last act of Police hooliganism. On the 26th January, a notification was issued releasing unconditionally Gandhi and 26 of his colleagues, in order to make it possible for them to conduct negotiations for a truce.

Thus silent sufferings of the people not only morally and virtually triumphed over brutal British force but gave it once a defeat which is historical in its far-reaching consequences and significance.

CHAPTER VI

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT 1932

As a result of the movement of 1930-31, Government of India, through the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, was forced to have truce-pact with the Congress on 4th March, 1931. But his successor Lord Wellingdon from the very start of his vice-royalty of India, was anxious and bent upon terminating truce with the Congress and wanted to crush it once for all. To help him in his design there was enough of the reactionary element in India.

In fact when Gandhiji and Lord Irwin came to an under-standing between themselves, those of the reactionary element in India which did not like this alliance immediately gathered forces and organised themselves into a united force to defeat the Indian Nationalists. It was in Simla, at the Headquarters of the Indian Government, that a part of this conspiracy was hatched.

The Government offensive commenced on the 4th January, 1932. Every Congress organization and every allied organi-zation was banned, and Congress-men whether they did any overt act or not in defiance of the Law or the Ordinances, which came to be spoken of as the Lawless Law, were got hold of, arrested and sentenced. While Government began where they had left, the Congress had to begin it all over-again. The Lathi-charge of Government was a later develop-ment in the first movement (1930). In 1932, it was the first friend that greeted the Satyagrahis. Gandhi was intending to go to the Talukas in Gujrat which had borne the burnt of the struggle in 1930, but before he could do so, he and his trusted lieutenant Vallabhbhai were both arrested and spirited

away as State prisoners in the small hours of the 4th January, 1932.

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru had already led the van. The rest of the Indian politicians led the rear. The Satyagrahis came forward in their thousands. In 1921 they were thirty thousand in number and that was considered a big number. In 1930-31, within a short interval of ten months, ninety thousand men, women and children were convicted and sentenced. No one knows how many were beaten, but the number can not be less than 3 or 4 times the number imprisoned. People were either beaten down into paralysis of all activity, or simply tired down by a 'cat and mouse 'policy. The old game of beating prisoners was renewed. Office secrets were asked to be divulged. "Where are your papers, your books, and your lists of subscriptions and volunteers?" That was the demand of Government and young men were harassed and unutterable things were said, unspeakable punishments were planned and executed. Imagine an advocate of the High Court being subjected to the torture of his hair being plucked out one by one as a mark of Police displeasure at his not giving out his name and address.

New occasions called for new Ordinances. The United Provinces Emergency Powers Ordinance which was issued on the 14th of December, 1931, authorised the Local Government to impose collective fines on the inhabitants of a particular area which could be recovered as Land Revenue. The three Ordinances relating to the North-West Frontier Province were issued on the 24th of December, 1931. One of them ran on the lines of the U. P. Ordinance and provided against non-payment of liabilities. The other two were known as N.W.F.P. Emergency Powers Ordinance and the N. W. F. P. Unlawful Association Ordinance.

On the 4th of January, four new Ordinances were issued known as (1) the Emergency Powers Ordinance, (2) Unlawful Instigation Ordinance, (3) Unlawful Association Ordinance and (4) Prevention of Molestation and Boycott Ordinance.

The events of 1932-33 ran on much the same lines as those of 1930-31. Only, the fight was more intensive and more determined. The repression was ever so much more ruthless and the suffering was ever so much more deep.

The Government offensive started with the arrest of Gandhi and the President of the Congress, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, in the early hours of the 4th of January. The above mentioned Ordinances of 1932 were issued the same morning and extended to several Provinces. Within the next few days, they were applied to practically the whole country. Many Provincial and subordinate Committees, Ashrams, National

Schools and other National institutions were declared unlawful, and their houses, furniture and funds and other moveables seized. Most of the leading Congressmen in the country were suddenly clapped into jails. The Congress organisation was thus apparently left without leaders, without funds, and even without any local habitation. The Congressmen who had been left behind were not, in spite of this sudden and determined swoop, without resources.

Everyone took up the work wherever he happened to be. The Working Committee had decided that vacancies on it, unlike in 1930, be not filled up and Sardar Vallabhbhai, anticipating his own arrest, had made out a list of several persons who would act in his place during his absence one after another. The Working Committee had transferred all its powers to the President, and the President in his turn transferred them to his successors who, in their turn, could nominate their own successors with similar powers. In the Provinces also, wherever it was possible, the whole power of the organisation was delegated to one person and similarly these powers percolated to a series of individuals exercising the rights of a Congress Committee in Districts, Thanas, Talukas and even villages. It was these individuals who came to be popularly known as 'Dictators.'

One of the difficulties which faced the organisers of any Civil Disobedience campaign related to the laws which could be selected for disobedience. It is evident that any law and every law may not be disobeyed. The ordinances with their wide remifications solved this difficulty for the Congress. In the different Provinces different items were selected, while there were certain items prescribed from time to time by the Acting President of the Congress. Thus, picketing of liquor shops and foreign cloth shops and of British goods was an item common to all Provinces. In the United Provinces on a pretty large scale, and in a portion of Bengal non-payment of rent was an important item. In places in Bihar and Bengal, payment of Chaukidari tax was withheld. In the Central Provinces and the Berar, Karnatak and some places in U. P., the Madras presidency and Bihar, Forest Laws were disobeyed. Salt Laws were defied in many places by manufacture, collection, or sale of illicit salt. Meetings and proceedings were of course prohibited and were held in spite of such prohibition. At an early stage of the struggle, a favourite item of the programme was the observance of what came to be known as special days. These were in connection with special events or individuals, or for special purposes, e. g. Gandhi Day, Motilal Day, Frontier Day, Martyrs Day, Flag Day and a number of other days.

As already stated, the Government had taken possession of Congress offices and Ashrams. Attempts were made in many places to get back symbolical possession of these places in Government hands, thus disobeying the Ordinance which made entry into those places a trespass. These attempts came to be known as 'raids'. Under the Ordinances the service of any press was not available to the Congress. This deficiency was made up by the issue of unauthorised bulletins leaflets, news-sheets, reports etc., which were typed, cyclostyled, duplicated, or even printed, but without the names of the press or the printers as required by law, some under the names of non-existent Presses and persons. It is remarkable that in spite of Police vigilance these news-sheets and bulletins were issued regularly and continued to furnish information to the country, as a whole, of all that was happening. The service of the Post Office and the Telegraph was denied to the Congress, and it established its own system of carrying its post not only from place to place in a Province but also from the All-India Office to the Provinces. Sometimes the volunteers carrying these postal articles were detected and naturally arrested or otherwise dealt with. This system which had really been started towards the latter part of the movement of 1930 was almost perfected in 1932. The Government were unable to locate even the offices of the A. I. C. C. or the Provincial Committees, from whence not only the bulletins but also instructions for the carrying on of the movement emanated, and when once either an office or an individual conducting it was located and put out of action, another sprang up and carried on the work. Another item which created much enthusiasm among the people and caused not a little embarrassment to the Police, was the holding of a session of the Congress followed by a series of conference in the Provinces and districts all over the country. In some places an attempt was made to interfere with the regular working of the Railways by the volunteers pulling the alarm signal in Railway trains and bringing them to a stop. An attempt was even made to make the Railway working difficult by large number of people boarding trains without tickets, simply to cause loss to the managements, but these found no encouragement from responsible quarters and were stopped.

The Boycott took a most intensive form and special items were selected for concentrated work. Thus in some places separate weeks were devoted to intensive propaganda for boycott of foreign cloth, or British medicines, British Banks, Insurance Companies, foreign sugar, kerosine oil, and British goods generally.

It is not to be supposed that Government after arresting the leaders would become quiet and mild. All the powers referred to in the Ordinances were used. But there were certain forms of repression which even the Ordinances, drastic as they were, did not sanction or contemplate. Needless to say that arrests were made in large numbers but they were made with discrimination, the total number of convictions being anything not less than a lakh. It soon became apparent that, in spite of camp jails and temporary jails being opened, the numbers that offered themselves for arrest could not all be accommodated. It was therefore necessary to make a selection, and only those who were supposed to possess some organising capacity or were prominently associated with the congress organisation were ordinarily imprisoned. Nor was it an easy matter to deal with them in Prison. More than ninety-five per-cent of the persons convicted were placed in the 'C' Class. There was a very small sprinkling of congressmen placed in the 'B' class, while the 'A' class was maintained only in name in several places and very sparingly granted in others.

The conditions of prison life were also not such as to be easily tolerated by a class of persons well brought up and having their own ideas about them. All this very often brought them into conflict with prison authorities, which resulted in the imposition of various kinds of jail penalties sanctioned by the rules and not unoften in beatings and other kinds of torture which can easily be practised within prison walls where there is no fear of detection. One particularly atrocious case of assault and beating for refusal to submit to the humiliating condition of sitting in a particular posture led to the prosecution and conviction of a jailor and his assistant and some others in Nasik Jail, but lathi-charges on Civil Disobedience prisoners were not uncommon. The conditions of life in the temporary Jails, with their tin-sheds which gave protection neither against the heat of May and June nor the cold of December and January, with their over-crowding and consequent insanitary conditions, were quite intolerable. There were, no doubt, some jails where the treatment was tolerably fair but that was rather the exception than the rule. Some of the permanent jails also were no better. It was reported that the Health of the Political prisoners in many of the jails, particularly in camp jails was far from satisfactory. Dysentry was common in all the seasons, while the rains and cold weather brought pneumonia and serious lung trouble to not a few. Many died as prisoners. The conditions in the permanent jails in some places were not much better. The treatment depended

naturally on the character and temper of the immediate jail officials, and these, with some notable exceptions here and there, were neither considerate nor even fair.

The Police had early taken to device of dispersing crowds and processions by lathi-charge. There was hardly an important place in any Province where the movement showed signs of life which did not experience these lathi-charges. In many places, the injuries caused were serious and the number of those injured large. It was a practice with the crowds to collect together to see what was happening where some Satyagrahis were marching in procession, holding a meeting, carrying on what is called a 'raid' or engaged in picketing, and when the lathi-charge was made, no discrimination was made between those who had assembled as sight-seers and those who had gone with the set purpose of disobeying the law. It was not unoften that the sight-seers were the victims of these lathi-charges and Satyagrahis were arrested and otherwise dealt with. Satyagrahis, too, had their share of these assaults, not only in a crowd where they were mixed up with other people but within the quieter and less exciting environments of a Police lock-up or a prison cell. It was commonly reported that in many places unmentionable atrocities and tortures were perpetrated, the variety and the cruelty of which varied with the intelligence, resourcefulness and callousness of the particular officers concerned. Even women and boys and children were not spared. The Government had discovered that while the Satyagrahis were prepared for prison, beating and torture, and many of them even to be shot, there were many who would succumb if an attack was made on their property. Accordingly heavy fines were imposed on conviction. Sometimes they rose to five figures. Three and four figures were common enough. Where non-payment of Revenue, rent or taxes was resorted to, for realisation of such dues and taxes and for realisation of fines, the properties of not only the defaulters and the convicts but also the property of joint families and sometimes of relatives were attached and sold. This by itself would be nothing if, as a result of such attachment and sale, properties of much value were not sold off virtually for a song. Besides the legally correct form of distress and attachment, what really mattered even more was the extra-legal and the illegal harassment and loss amounitng in not a few cases to wanton loot and waste. Not only were moveables like furniture, household utensils, jewellery and even cattle and standing crop attached and sold and some times destroyed, but the very lands and homesteads were not spared. There are many in Gujrat, the U.P., and Karnatak

who are landless even to-day and whose suffering was entirely voluntary, in the sense that they refused to pay what they could easily have paid if sufferings were none-the-less imposed upon them, because, they need not have been deprived of all that they lost. The agriculturists of Gujrat who joined in the non-payment of Revenue and rent campaign went through sufferings which it is impossible to describe, but they did not bend. There were many places where extra police were posted as a punitive measure and their cost realised from the inhabitants. From four or five places only in Bihar where such extra police were posted in the Province, no less than four lakhs and seventy thousand was realised as punitive tax. The terror and havoc created by tthe posting of additional force was so great in parts of the district of Midnapur in Bengal that the bulk of the Hindu population of two Thanas in the District actually evacuated their homes and shifted to the neighbouring areas in the midst of indescribable suffering resulting in the death of women.

Besides such Punitive Tax, collective fines were also imposed on many localities and the inhabitants were made to pay them. In several places in the country, firing was resorted to and many persons killed and many more injured. In this respect the N.W.F.P. suffered the severest losses in killed and injured.

Thus the atrocities of the Government were progressively increasing since 1857 with the application of Newer, more drastic and more tyrannical methods for the supression of the peoples' desires and efforts to be free. But it should not be ignored that once the battle of freedom is begun, it can never end unless it is won.

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PART II

EVENTS LEADING TO QUIT INDIA MOVE

CHAPTER I

CONGRESS AND WAR

On September 1, 1939, Germany marched into Poland and two days later the British and French Governments declared war upon Germany. Under the British law the declaration of war by the United Kingdom was enough to drag India automatically into the war and make her a belligerent country and an enemy of Germany. It was left to the Viceroy of India simply to announce the decision which was made in London, the fact that India was at war,[1] and this the Viceroy did with promptness.

No government and people outside the British, French and German empires entered the war on its outbreak. All free peoples of the world outside the three warring empires were neutral in varying degrees. Even within the British Empire, the Government and people of Ireland had chosen to remain neutral. The peoples of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, though they form part of the British Empire, were also not automatically dragged into the war and they took the decision to fight Germany in their own governments and parliaments.

The attitude of the Indian National Congress in regard to questions of war and peace was not unknown to the Government of the United Kingdom, when it assumed and declared India a belligerent country without reference to the Indian people. Through an unbroken chain of four successive annual sessions, the Congress had resolved on behalf of the Indian people not to take part in and to resist a war which Britain might force on India and which went contrary to the foreign policy which the Congress had sought to outline. The pillars on which this policy rested were as follows.

Firstly, India may not be declared a belligerent country nor any use of her resources, men and money made in a war without the consent of the Indian people.

Secondly, the decision on war can be made only by Free India.

Thirdly, the fascism of Hitler and others which suppressed the freedom of its own population and conquered and enslaved other peoples is to be looked upon with horror but the imperialism of Britain and others must be found to be equally at the root of the world's slavery, violence and wars. In fact, apart from what British imperialism does to the

populations subject to it and the standing model and incitement that it is to other well armed powers to outrival it, British foreign policy must also be held responsible for encouraging the forces of evil as in the Italo-Ethiopian, Spanish and China-Japan wars and, thus for hastening a world war. India therefore, can have nothing to do with a war whose object may in any way be the continuance either of imperialism or fascism. The World can be made secure against the crime of wars only if the imperialist and fascist systems are destroyed.

Fourthly, India offers her co-operation in the cause of real collective security of the peoples of the world and in that of freedom and democracy.

Fifthly, the increasing use of armaments and their rapidly mounting manufacture is a source of serious anxiety to the future of the world. In pursuance of this policy and the action notwithstanding of the Indian Government in despatching Indian troops overseas, the Congress Working Committee even before the outbreak of the present war had withdrawn Congress members of the Central Legislature from its sessions.

Events moved fast and confusingly till the Working Committee met and issued a manifesto on September 14. This manifesto examined the issues involved in the present war and outlined India's attitude towards them.

Firstly, it objected to the manner in which India had been declared a belligerent country and the powers and activities of the Provincial Governments limited under the various Ordinances. It saw in this action of the British Government a deliberate ignoring of the wishes of the Indian people.

Secondly, the manifesto made it clear that India could not associate herself in a war under complusion and without her free consent which she could give only after she was assured her own freedom and considered the cause of the war worthy. "Co-operation must be between equals by mutual consent for a cause which both consider to be worthy", said the manifesto.

Thirdly, the Working Committee drew attention to the past of the British Government and its foreign policy which had ignored again and again high ideals and the sentiments of its own people. The war of 1914-18 which was declared to have been fought for the preservation of democracy, self-determination and the freedom of small nations had ended up in a treaty which had denied all these. Subsequently, the British Government betrayed democracy and peace in Manchuria, Abyssinia, Spain and Czechoslovakia.

Fourthly, the manifesto contemplated with anxiety the terrible state of the world to-day. It said, "Innumerable

innocent men, women and children have been bombed to death from the air in open cities, cold blooded massacres, torture and utmost humiliation have followed each other in quick succession during these years of horror. That horror grows and violence and threat of violence shadow the world, and unless checked and ended will destroy the precious inheritance of past ages." In condemning the latest aggression of the Nazi Government in Germany against Poland the manifesto reiterated the Congress disapproval of the ideology and practice of Fascism and Nazism, their glorification of war and violence, their sweeping away of well-established principles and recognised standards of civilised behaviour and their suppression of the human spirit.

Fifthly, the manifesto found the cause of the present war in "the social and political conflicts and contradictions which have grown alarmingly since the last Great War". These conflicts arise principally out of attempts to retain imperialist domination in any part of the world. To resolve these conflicts and establish a new equilibrium and world-order domination of one country by another has to cease and economic relations have to be reorganised for the common good of all. Imperialism and Fascism alike have to be ended.

Sixthly, the Working Committee invited "the British Government to declare in unequivocal terms what their *war aims* are in regard to democracy and imperialism and the new-order that is envisaged". Taking India to be the crux of the problem, the manifesto particularly questioned if these war aims include "the elimination of imperialism and the treatment of India as a free nation" and the right of the Indian people to frame "their own constitution through a Constituent Assembly without external interference and if immediate effect was to be given to these aims to the largest possible extents".

Seventhly, the manifesto asserted that, "a free democratic India will gladly associate herself with other free nations for mutual defence against aggression and for economic co-operation" and showed the willingness of the Working Committee to give their co-operation in the task of checking horror in Europe and China.

Eighthly, the Working Committee earnestly appealed "to the Indian people to end all internal conflict and controversy and in this grave hour of peril to keep in readiness and hold together as a united nation calm of purpose and determined to achieve the freedom of India within the larger freedom of the world."

The Committee also appointed a War Emergency Sub-committee with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as its Chairman.

On October 10, the All-India Congress Committee approved and endorsed the statement issued by the Working Committee and repeated the invitation to the British Government to state their war aims and peace aims. The All-India Congress Committee reiterated the objectives of the Congress and said, "the Congress has been guided throughout by its objective of achieving the independence of the Indian people and the establishment of a free democratic state in India wherein the rights and interest of all minorities are preserved and safeguarded. The means it has adopted in its struggles and activities have been peaceful and legitimate, and it has looked war and violence with horror and as opposed to progress and civilisation."

During the A.I.C.C. debate, the need and propriety of the Working Committee's Invitation to the British Government to declare its war and peace aims was questioned. Was it not apparent to everybody what these aims were, what the past of British imperialism had been and its present structure and necessity to dominate and enslave the world, said the questioners. Answering this question at the end of the debate, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru referred to the curious situation of British imperialism in which it was on the one hand continuing to maintain its domination and exploitation over a large part of the world and, on the other, professing to wage war against aggression and for the defence of freedom and world peace. This contradiction between practice and profession was not apparent to many millions in the world. The Invitation of the Working Committee, therefore, forced the British Government either to come out in their true colours and shed their professions or to shed their imperialism and act up to their declarations. This pressure on the British Government to reveal the truth for all the world to see was an act of service to India and the entire freedom-loving world. The manifesto of the Working Committee had, therefore, been acclaimed even by people outside India as the "Charter of the oppressed".

Meanwhile, the British Government in London had attempted to answer the Congress through the Secretary of State for India that the demand made by the Congress was inopportune and that the British people were susceptible to honourable treatment. Honour! If the British Secretary meant that the Indian people were no longer prepare to do honour to his government and be obediently loyal to it, he was indeed right. If he meant gentlemanly action, it should not have been difficult to choose between the British Government which had flouted the insistent wishes of a whole people and which was continuing to act contrary to its professions and the Indian

Congress which had spoken in the name of the freedom and the peace of the world. It was imperialism and bad manners and the Secretary of State for India that had succeeded in irritating a whole people who are generally of a forgiving disposition.

The Viceroy of India started a procession of interviews with many people, some men important because the Indian people thought them so, while many more because the Government thought them so. Altogether the Viceroy interviewed over fifty people. On October 8, he gave the Britsh Government's reply to the Congress manifesto.

Firsly, in regard to their war aims and peace aims, the Viceroy said, the British Government sought no advantages from the war and were impelled to stop aggression and secure the peace of the world. It was easy to see that the Viceroy had side-stepped the issues that were raised by the Congress and that alone will shape the future of the world for good or for bad. The Congress had asked if the British Government were prepared to forego the unjust advantages accrued to them through their domination over and exploitation of one-fourth of the world, and the answer came that they did not wish for any fresh advantages. The Congress had asked if the British Government were willing to make all war impossible by ending the causes of war, which lay in imperialism and fascism, but their reply refused to disclose as to how they intended to secure the peace of the world. They had presumably in mind the old method of defeating the enemy and erecting a precarious peace on that basis.

Secondly, in regard to their aims concerning India, the Viceroy said, the British Government were committed to the goal of dominion status and would be willing to confer with Indian representatives as to the nature of advance to be made at the end of the war. There was no mention in the Viceregal statement of the words 'Independent India', and it was clear that the British Government were as afraid of this term as they probably would be of a bomber overhead or as they should be of their own conscience. They did not like to forego the right, precious to them but oppressive to the Indian People or arbitrating over India's future and they were willing at the end of the war to call in Indian representatives for purposes of consultation. The British Government forgot that the Indian people had long got over the stage of conferencing and being consulted; they wished to be masters in their own country and did not particularly like to be advisers to foreign rulers.

Thirdly, in regard to the nature of advance to be immediately attempted, the Viceroy was willing to call together

a consultative committee of Indian representatives for purposes of association in the war. It is needless to add that there lay the wide gulf of centuries between the consultative committee proposed by the Viceroy and the widest possible application here and now of democracy and self-government demanded by the Congress. Of course, the Viceroy did not let go the opportunity of insisting on differences in Indian opinion which he had come to know through the differing viewpoints which were placed before him by his over fifty interviewers.

The answer of India's spokesmen to the Viceregal statement was prompt, short and unmistakable. Aside from the gap of a few hours caused by telegraphic transmission, the reactions of Mahatma Gandhi became known to the country immediately after the Viceroy's statement. "The Congress will have to go into wilderness again" said Gandhiji and added : "The British declaration shows clearly that there is to be no democracy for India if Britain can prevent it. The long statement made by the Viceroy simply shows that the old policy of divide and rule is to continue".

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said: "If this is the final answer of the British Government to the people of India, then, there is no common ground between the two and our path diverge completely". As President of the United Provinces Congress Committee, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru appealed to Congressmen of the province to "keep ready. And whatever happens do not forget that we may do nothing against our high principles and not in keeping with India's honour. Keep calm and cool and disciplined. Keep ready".

After an extraordinarily short session, the Working Committee decided in its resolution of October 22, that "it can not possibly give any support to Great Britain, for it would amount to an endorsement of the imperialist policy which the Congress has always sought to end. As a first step in this direction the Committee call upon the Congress ministers to tender resignations."

Further, the Committee called upon "all Congress committees and congressmen generally to be prepared for all developments and eventualities and to show restraint of word and deed" and not to resort to "any hasty action in the shape of civil disobedience, political strikes and the like". Congressmen were asked to remember that "a programme of resistance, commensurate with the magnitude of the issue before the country, requires perfect discipline within Congress ranks and the consolidation of the Congress organisation". Events were moving fast. Congressmen and the people generally felt that they were living in glorious times and that the time had come for them to shed their little lives and to sleep on

their haversacks. The scent of adventure for great ideals was in the air.

The Congress ministries resigned. In the seven provinces of the Congress ministers, the Governors were unable to form ministries that could command popular support and suspended the constitution. In the eighth province of a Congress-coalition Ministry, the Governor formed a new ministry. The phase that had lasted 27 months was over. The constitution was wrecked. At the first touch of reality when the British-enforced constitution and the loyalty of Congress ministries to their fundamental pledge of India's freedom were alike on test, the utter unworkablity of the constitution was proved and the British Government had to wreck it with their own hands. The people of seven provinces as represented in their provincial assemblies also accepted resolutions on the lines of the Working Committee's manifesto on war.

Between the Working Committee's decision to non-co-operate with the British Government and the almost entire wrecking of the constitution to date, the Viceroy of Indian invited Mahatma Gandhi, President Rajendra Prasad and Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Muslim League President, to meet him. Subsequent to these meetings and exchange of some correspondence, the Viceroy suggested in a press statement on November 5, that "there remains today entire disagreement between the representatives of the major parties on fundamental issues" and, as a result of it, there was failure in negotiations, but that, undaunted by this failure, he proposed, "in due course to try again in consultation with the leaders of these great parties and the princes to see if even now there may still be the possibility of securing unity."

To Understand this talk of failure and unity, and fundamental disagreements, it is necessary to examine the correspondence that took place between the Congress President and the Viceroy. The Viceroy had asked the Congress and the Muslim League to get together and arrive at an agreement as to how they could send their representatives on the Central Government as members of his Executive Council and also work harmoniously in the Provinces. The Viceroy had also suggested that the privileges and obligations of the Congress and the League members of his Executive Council would be the same as those of the existing members of the Council. That was his entire proposal.

It is not difficult to see that this proposal was absurd as far as the Congress was concerned. The Congress had definitely decided not to play the role of advisers to foreign rulers and to help in the exploitation of Indian resources and

manpower in peace and much more so in war. The Congress wants to secure the peace of the world through the freedom of all peoples and had as such asked the British Government to agree to the right of the Indian people to frame their own constitution in a Constituent Assembly and to provide for an interim arrangement conceding maximum possible political power to Indian representatives. This was a high national objective and an equally international aim, but the Viceroy had again managed to keep singularly quiet, in regard to them.

Failure, then of negotiations between whom, fundamental disagreements between whom, and the lack of unity between whom? Obviously, between the Congress and the British Government and not, between the Congress and the Muslim League. Is it suggested that the Muslims of India or any organisations even partly representing them including the Muslim League do not want the freedom of their country or the peace of the world? There is nothing on record to prove that this is so. The Viceroy has been guilty of looseness of thought or of practising intentionally or otherwise, it is not for us to say, the old policy of divide and rule in describing what was a fundamental disagreement between him and the Congress as one between the Congress and the Muslim League.

The reply of the Muslim League President to the Viceroy also made the position clear. In his letter of November 4, Mr. Jinnah stated that the Congress was not prepared to discuss any questions relating to the Centre or the Provinces "until the British Government had complied with their demand as embodied in the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee", in other words, until the British Government had decided to give up its occupation of India. Mr. Jinnah did not, in this connection or any other during the course of this letter, talked of any disagreement between him and the Congress. In his letter to the Viceroy President Rajendra Prasad had, therefore, pointed out with eminent justice and great dignity that, "it has pained to find the communal question being dragged in this connection. It has clouded the main issue. It has been repeatedly said on behalf of the Congress that it is our earnest desire to settle all points of communal controversy by agreement and we propose to continue our efforts to this end. But I would point out that this question does not in any respect come in the way of a declaration of Indian freedom (as suggested by the Congress)".

In its demand for India's freedom, the Congress does not seek power for itself or for any particular community in the country. The constitution of India will be framed by a

Constituent Assembly which "will be formed on the widest possible basis of franchise and by agreement in regard to communal respresentation." As such, the Congress fights for withdrawing political power from the British Government and for bestowing it upon the Indian people. This vital fact seems to be lost sight of by the British Government and certain other people. Any organisation in India anxious to achieve this ideal or that and to serve any one interest will, therefore, join with the Congress in the struggle for freedom and thus woo the electorate and the masses for its due share in the Governance of the Country.

The first step was taken when the Congress declared its non-co-operation with the British Government. Thereafter there were two possible policies either of which could have been adopted. The one that the Congress could adopt was to transform its co-operation with the Government into immediate civil resistance and thus work out its policy of resisting the use of Indian men and resources in an imperialist war and also defiantly maintain national dignity and the principle of freedom against the British challenge. The other which the Congress actually adopted was the policy of providing for an intermediate stage of preparation between the step of non-co-operation that it had already taken and that of civil disobedience when it become necessary. This stage of preparation was to be devoted to the removal of the more dangerous weakness in the national position. Arguments could be advanced to prove the greater desirablity of the one or the other policy but by far the most effective argument that clinched the issue in favour of the temporary stage of preparation was that it was already decided upon by the Working Committee.

Thereafter the annual session of the Indian National Congress at Ramgarh passed a resolution on its war policy approving the previous resolutions and actions on the war situation by the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee. Firstly it declared, that the Congress can not in any way, directly or indirectly, be a party to the war which means continuance and perpetuation of this exploitation (i. e. exploitation of the people of India as well as of other Asiatic and African countries) and it emphatically declared that nothing short of complete Independence can be accepted by the people of India. "Further about communal harmony it expressed," no permanent solution is possible except through a Constituent Assembly, where the rights of all recognised minorities will be fully protected by agreement. "As regards the sovereignity of the people it made clear, sovereignity in India must rest with the people, whether in the States or the Provinces".

In this resolution while it was clearly mentioned that the

congress withdrew the ministries in order to dissociate India from the war and to enforce the Congress determination to free India from foreign domination, it also laid stress on discipline and constructive programme.

It is almost about a year after this that the Congress started its symbolic Satyagrah in November, 1940. In short this was the attitude and policy of the Congress towards the last world-war from its very start.

CHAPTER II

GANDHIJI AND WAR

Gandhiji on the very out-break of the last great world war expressed, when he was invited by the Viceroy to meet him, his abhorrence against the violent warfare and its horrors. Subsequent to this meeting Gandhiji issued a statement on September, 5. He said, "I am not therefore, just now thinking of India's deliverance. It will come, but what will it be worth if England or France fall or if they come out victorious over Germany ruined and humbled." It is obvious that the thought of a ruined and humbled Germany was as much a matter of sorrow to Gandhiji as that of a defeated England or France. In like manner Gandhiji's concern at the destruction of London and the Westminister Abbey arose out of what he himself called a "purely humanitarian standpoint." To those who had misread into his concern at destruction a preference for Britain, Gandhiji explained on September, 11 : "I would not care to erect the freedom of my country on the remains of despoiled Germany. I should be as much moved by a contemplation of the possible destruction of Germany's monuments". It is clear, therefore, that Gandhiji's sympathies, in so far as destruction caused by war is concerned, are evenly distributed over all victims, be they British or Germans.

After seeing the Viceroy, Gandhiji expressed his sympathies with Britain and France as much as with Germany and they were in accord with the Congress policy and his principles of distaste of war, violence and armaments.

He appealed to all war-mongers of the world to desist from the course of destruction of human life and property which were the best creation of God and man.

He gave his personal moral support to the British Government and their cause. He also advised the Congress for its unconditional moral support to the British Government in its hour of trouble and trial. He was opposed to any embarrassment to the British Government in its war efforts.

Hence this scheme of satyagrah in 1941, was so formulated as not to interfere in the least with the war efforts of the Government of India. He chose only his best Satyagrahis to offer a mere symbolic Satyagrah and that too who believed in non-violence as a faith. His Satyagrahis offered Satyagrah after giving previous notice to the Government as regards time and place of their offering Satyagrah, which was nothing else but merely shouting his faith in non-violence and his opposition to all armed wars, violence and aid to such wars with men or money. But that being symbolic did not interfere in the least with the war efforts of the Government of India. Most of such satyagrahis were arrested even before they actually went to shout or shouted but merely on sending a notice of their intention to shout such slogans.

Gandhiji further clarifying the issue between India and Britain said in his message to a London paper on November 14, "If there is to be a fight between Britain and the Congress, the world should know what it is to be for, does Britain intend to recognise India as an independent nation or must India remain Britain's dependency". Attempts are made by spokesmen of the British Government to confuse the main issue by flinging the minorities' question in India's face and by bracketing the Europeans of India and the Princes with the other minorities. If European interests are to be preserved, "rights acquired by conquest remain intact", says Mahatamaji and adds in regard to the Princes, "to raise the question of Princes is still more untenable. They are part of the Paramount Power. It is painful to think that British statesmen do not so much mention the millions of people of the States".

It may be mentioned here that the many millions of states' peoples as against their 600 and odd princes have spoken through the All-India States Peoples' Conference endorsing the Congress attitude on War. The Frontier Province, which has the highest percentage of Muslims than in any part of India was being ruled by a Governor who wrecked the constitution because the people of the Province refused to associate themselves with British War Policies. Aside from the Congress, certain other organisations also of Muslims such as Jamiat-ul-Ulema, Arhars, sections of Momins and Shias and others, have adopted the Congress attitude on War.

We give below some extracts from a speech about Gandhiji on India, Britain and the present war by Mr. Louis Fisher, a well known American Journalist delivered by him in his own country :—

"Gandhi has a devotion to the truth and an uninhibited

tongue which makes him tell the whole story. It gets him into all kinds of difficulties he said to me for instance and he has said subsequently in writing: 'I would go to Japan and sign a treaty of peace with the Japanese' Now he immediately added in the conversation to me, I know the British will never let me go to Japan and I know that if I ever go to Japan, the Japanese would'nt sign a treaty of peace with me'. Then why talk about it? Because the idea had occurred to him and for Gandhi the fact that an idea is not practicable does not mean that he must not talk about it. However, this statement has enabled persons who have ulterior motives and wish to defame Gandhi—to say that Gandhi is pro-Japanese. Now there are many Americans and many Englishmen whose word as to who is pro-Japanese I would not accept because many of thos Americans and Englishmen were themselves pro-Japanese and appeased the Japanese and sent Japan the scrap and oil which our boys are now getting back in uglier form. There is one man whose word I would take as to who is pro or anti-Japanese and that is Chiang-Kai-Shek and he is pro-Gandhi and pro-Indian independence and he has intervened (as I told you) with President Roosevelt and with Winston Churchill in recent months repeatedly, with a view to the moderation of British policy in India. Chiang-Kai-Shek knows that Gandhi is anti-Japanese, pro-chinese and anti-axis. And Gandhi has proved it. But it's simply Gandhi's manner of speech that exposes him to these false charges.

Gandhi did the same thing in the current political crisis. Against the background of India's internal misery and the mounting resentment and bitterness there occured the British Military reverses in the Far East—Hong Kong, Malaya, Singapore and Burma—British prestige in Asia dropped to zero. There was panic in India. The Indians were afraid that the British would run from India as they had so recently from Burma. There was no confidence among Indians in England's ability to defend India. The British Government in London realized that an emergency had arisen in India, but it was only after a very healthy prod from President Roosevelt that the British War Cabinet rushed one of its members Sir Stafford Cripps out to India to repair the damage. Now whatever the causes of Cripps' failure. (And in the light of his subsequent dismissal from the War Cabinet—He was taken into the War Cabinet when the Churchill Cabinet shook as the result of the fall of Singapore and the escape of Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, the two German pocket battleships under the nose of the R.A.F. and the British Navy through the English Channel, Churchill

needed Cripps' popular support and took him into the War Cabinet and Cripps was dismissed from that Cabinet three days after Rommel's defeat in Egypt and after we landed in North Africa, in that perspective it becomes clear that Cripps' mission to India was only part of the destruction of Cripps. Stalin shoots his rivals as Churchill digests his. Cripps tried to succeed, but he failed because certain reactionery British imperialists did not want him to succeed—did not want him to become a greater figure in England than he was). But whatever, the causes of Cripps' failure, the fact is that he failed to repair the damage. The damage, therefore grew worse. It was as an intuitive, spontaneous reaction to that deterioration of the Indian situation that Gandhi said, 'I'm sick of this, the British must go.' Then he thought: friends talked to him and he said, 'That was wrong, I have no right to say that,' Gandhi is one of the few big men in the world who is big enough to admit his errors in public. And Gandhi said, 'I can not ask the British to quit India during the war. That would mean making a present of India to the Axis.' Gandhi has said from that day to this, 'The British and Americans can stay in India. They can reinforce their armed services in India. They can use India as Base for Military operations against the Axis Powers.' Neither Gandhi nor any other Indian Leader is asking the British to get out of India during the War. Neither Gandhi nor any Indian Leader expects complete independence during the war. All that Gandhi or the Indian leaders are asking for is an Indian National Government, which Gandhi said to me in so many words which were subsequently published, 'An Indian National Government which would not interfere with Military operations, but which would immediately sign a treaty of alliance with the United Nations to help them to win the War.'

The Indian leaders contend that it is only by giving India some such concession, some such instalment during the war on complete independence after the war, it is only in this way that you can arouse the Indian people to support the war for freedom. If we ask ourselves why the Russians and the Chinese have fought so stubbornly and well, whereas the Indians are completely apathetic to this war the answer is that one fights the war, that you and I are fighting this war, because we have something to lose or because we expect to gain something. But the Indians have very little to lose and nobody has told them in ringing terms that they are likely to gain anything.

On the contrary I sat in the gallery of the House of Commons in September, 1941 when Churchill, after his rendezvous

with President Roosevelt in the Atlantic Charter, came to the House of Commons. A member of Parliament arose and said, Mr. Prime Minister, does Article III of the Atlantic Charter (which gives every country right to choose its own form of Government) apply to India ? Churchill stood up and said, "No Sir", and sat down. Nothing which Smuts or Halifax or Herbert Morrison or Cripps or any British spokesman has said since that day at all mitigates or diminishes the validity of those two words, "No Sir." Indeed Churchill had reinforced them on November 10, when speaking in London, he said, "England will hold her own. I have not become the King's First Minister in order to preside at the liquidation of the British Empire". And by calling the British Empire a British Commonwealth you do not change it's spots. Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and Australia are free dominions, but India is an oppressed and unhappy colony. If we are to use India as a base for the defeat of Japan we will have a sorry time if there is turmoil and bitterness and discontent among the hundreds of millions.

What are our war aims in this war ? The four freedoms—freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want (that means prosperity and security), freedom from fear (that means peace). These are things that we want for ourselves. This is not a war about a map. There may never be a Peace conference after this war. Peace will not be established by lifting up one country and destroying another or by tearing a piece of territory away from one country and tacking it on to the other. This is war about ourselves, this is a social war, this is a war about the fundamentals of the life that we live.

Some people, who think in two dimensions, say : "Hitler and Mussolini and France and the Japanese militarists made this war." That is correct, but we made them, Hitler, maniac, mad man though he be, is nevertheless the child of our civilization. He is a product of our society. We defeated the Kaiser, we got a Hitler. We could defeat Hitler and get a worse Hitler, unless we destroy the soil and the seed in which Hitlerism grows. This, therefore, is not merely a war against foreign Fascism and foreign Hitlers. This is equally a war against the 50 per cent Hitlers and the 10 per cent Hitlers and the 2 per cent Hitlers who live in the midst of the Democracies and who have helped to make this and other wars (Applause). The peace will depend on us, on what we think or what we do during the war. After all, the peace will be no better than the men who make it. Governments create peace in their own image. Peace like charity begins at home, and only to the extent that we prepare for a peace will

there be a peace. Some day, we may be grateful to Gandhi for having raised for all of us that fundamental question of whether we purify ourselves during the war as to be capable of making a better world after the war.

On July 4 while I was in India the British Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, gave a party in his great marble palace in New Delhi to celebrate America's independence from the British Empire (Laughter). At that party, I heard all the arguments against India's independence from the British Empire. A British General who had been in Burma said to me. "But could a free India after the war defend itself ?" I said to him, "Could England ?" What country nowadays can defend itself single handedly ? Not England, not France, not Italy, probably not the United States and Russia. If only those countries which can defend themselves are to be independent after this war then there will be very few independent states, and the General's question only means that after this war there will have to be an international organization which will defend all countries against all aggressors. At the same party I was asked to sit down next to Lady Linlithgow, a handsome, regal lady, the wife of the Viceroy. She tried to talk to me about the weather which is a ubiquitous subject of conversation in India, it being 110° usually from morning until late in the afternoon, but I soon got her off on the subject of politics and India's independence, and she said, "But are these people capable of ruling themselves ?" Some times I'm blunt in conversation. I said, "Lady Linlithgow, you know that's a very queer question to ask on a night like this. That's exactly what the British Tories said about the thirteen colonies in 1776". And as the President pointed out in his speech, which is printed in to-day's paper, "There were plenty of Americans, the skeptics, the cynics of Washington's day who did not believe that ordinary men and women have the capacity for freedom and self-government." I did not say to the wife of the Viceroy, but I went on thinking that some times when I look at the mess which the so called 'Civilized' nations have made in the world, I think perhaps we ought to call in the so-called 'uncivilized' nations like China and India to help us rule the world. We are very wonderful at making perfect frigidaires and automobiles and bombs, but we have run ourselves into two world wars in one generation—and that is no proof of our capacity to manage world affairs. At any rate just as the majority of Americans in Washington's day felt that they were entitled to freedom and independence, so the Indians, so the Asiatics feel that they want freedom and there will be trouble if we try to obstruct them. The capacity to use freedom is learned ; you are not born

with it. It's learned in the exercise of freedom and independence.

I came away from India with the profound conviction that if there were the will, India could be united politically overnight and that of course would be only the first step towards ultimate social and economic union. I came away from India with the conviction that the obstacle to Indian independence does not lie in India. It lies in England. India is a very good thing. Many interests and companies and families in England have grown rich on India. But the problem is bigger than that. Neville Chamberlain was an appeaser, because he was afraid that if England became involved in a war his England (the England of caste and privilage and money and aristocracy) would die. But Churchill says, "No, England can fight this war and wi)it and remain the old England." And Churchill's England includes the emasculation of the Beveridge report and includes all kinds of reactionary measures.

The question therefore, is not whether India is ripe for freedom. The question is whether we are ripe for Indian freedom. If there were a new England emerging out of this war, if there were a new England to supplant the old England of Chamberlain and Churchill, it would not wish to hold India. That is really the issue."

Gandhiji was all along anxious to protect India from Japanese invasion. Hence realising the weakness of the British Indian Government, to save India from foreign and specially Japanese aggression, his anxiety grew much more for India's defence and at the same time he felt that there was not even genuine desire on the part of the Government to save India and hence reluctance for any sincere effort in the direction of gaining real co-operation and support of the Indians in its war efforts. The proof of this mentality Government gave convincingly from the Cripp's proposals and their ultimate fate. So Gandhiji's patriotism and burning desire to save his countrymen from utter ruin and destruction at the hands of the foreign invaders, made him really anxious to arouse genuine interest and support of the people of India in all sorts of attempts, non-violent and violent, for the protection of their mother-land. It is with this object and motive that he desired independence of India and felt compelled to think of launching his 'Quit India' movement.

Gandhiji can be extensively quoted in support of this contention. Gandhiji's own position about Cripps' proposals was that he saw Cripps at Delhi on 27th March and left Delhi on 4th April. There after in the issue of Harjan dated June 28, 1942 he wrote :-

"Sir Stafford knows that I was disinclined to proceed to New Delhi. Having gone there, I intended to return the same day that I reached there. But Maulana Saheb would not let me go. I wish I could have induced the Working Committee to take up its stand on pure non-violence. But it did not, and could not. With it, rightly, politics were all important and it could not having the conviction, allow its deliberations to be affected by the issue of non-violence, the deliberations therefore, of the Working Committee at New Delhi were carried on without any interference or guidance on my part".

Non-violence has been the first article of his faith and philosophy of life. He laid all possible emphasis on this as is clear from his various speeches and articles. Even the very resolution of the A. I. C. C. of Bombay laid the greatest possible emphasis on 'non-violence'. While sanctioning the movement it clearly stated, "the committee resolves to sanction a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale so that the country might utilise all the non-violent strength".

Gandhiji's position about the August Movement 1942, as has ever been the case with him, was quite definite and clear. He wanted to avoid any clash with the Government and if it was inevitable, he wanted to lead a non-violent movement strictly on his own set lines and after giving due time and notice to the Government. His movement was not going to be in any way secret or violent one. To him non-violence was dearer and higher than even the Independence of India.

The events and acts, which followed the arrest of Gandhiji and thousands of Congress leaders and workers on 9th August and after, were not premeditated and pre-planned but were as a result of sudden outburst of popular resentment on Government acts which were absolutely uncalled for, unreasonable and high-handed in the extreme. For which the entire responsibility is of the Government and not of Gandhiji.

Ghandiji's personal views about the movement and the Government action are very clearly and in short expressed by him in his letter to the Secretary to the Government of India, dated September, 23, 1942. An extract from which is given below :-

"The wholesale arrest of the Congress leaders seems to have made the people wild with rage to the point of losing self-control. I feel that the Government, not the Congress, were responsible for the destruction that has taken place. The only right course for the Government seems to me to be to release the Congress Leaders, withdraw all repressive measures and explore ways and means of conciliation. Surely, the

Government have ample resources to deal with any overt act of violence. Repression can only breed discontent and bitterness."

Gandhiji, true to his principles, has always been favouring, aspiring and endeavouring for peace and compromise and ever striving to avoid war and violence.

CHAPTER III

CRIPPS MISSION : ITS FAILURE AND CONSEQUENCES

How the Government was planning from behind the scene to secure the failure of Cripps proposals and face the consequences is vividly described by Shri Devi Das Gandhi, the talented son of Gandhiji in his foreword to a book "Why Cripps failed" the relevant extract from it is given below :—

"No one in this Country will be disposed to blame the failure on Sir Stafford Cripps alone. If there has been very caustic comment against him, some from those whom he counted amongst his best friends, the reason lies in some of the statements he made in the aftermath of controversy. Yet he alone, among the many British official spokesmen, laid stress on the need for avoiding rancour after the failure of the negotiations. The others with silent but characteristic disdain repudiated his tenderness and were glad to be able to use the bludgeon again. Weeks after the negotiations I had occasion to meet the representative in New Delhi of a leading British newspaper. He did not mince words, 'I do not think', he said, 'that His Majesty's Government had any faith in those proposals. They let him come out with them because they thought they would do no harm. In other words, a temporary upsurge of British Public opinion had forced the Cabinet to compromise with Cripps on India. But being more conversant than Sir Stafford Cripps himself with the prevailing phase of representative Indian opinion, some of his colleagues of the Group which control Indian policy in the Cabinet, certainly got the better of the give and take. Sir Stafford could not have known so well as did Mr. Amery, that India, alarmed at the prospect of a discontented and unorganized people falling an easy prey to Japan, regarded immediate freedom as more vital than a promise of future Independence. He came out to India with the dice already loaded against him. That he is now sent out of the War Cabinet confirms the theory. The official remark in New Delhi too, when the proposals were made known, was that there was no danger of their acceptance in India".

The existence of a strong section of opinion in this

country which holds that on grounds of expediency the Congress should have accepted the proposals most be admitted. But the obvious reply is that the Congress Working Committee tried its best to arrive at a compromise with Sir Stafford Cripps in full consciousness of the situation. The break came in spite of this. Nor was there any knowing that even if the Congress pocketed its pride in respect of many a point of vital principle in the hope of ultimate fulfilment, the Muslim League and the other bodies would have obliged. And by the consequent lack of "general" agreement Sir Stafford would still have faced discomfiture at the hands of those in England who saw the liquidation of Empire in his unimperialistic idelogy. In the result everyone of note, both in India and England, except Mr. Churchill and Amery and those who enjoy and depend upon their patronage, finds himself placed in the most awkward position imaginable. It was a resounding triumph for someone.

The next step was to put the Congress out of the picture and to prepare for the defence of India both against Japan and itself. Again the old imperialist guard had nothing to loss. It was their normal programme. Although they did not quite anticipate it, the actual loss of thousands of Indian lives by shooting and the effect of floggings, imprisonment and collective fines on the masses of India did not and does not worry them. For propaganda purposes, however, they are anxious to place the blame on Congress leaders.

With nearly a hundred thousand men and women in jail there is today no spokesman available who may be competent to speak on behalf of the Congress. But as one who has long had the privilege of intimate contact with Congress Leaders, I take this liberty of recording here a little significant history which has an important bearing on the question. The All-India Congress Committee at Bombay adopted its resolution on the general situation at about 8 P. M. on 8th August. I spoke on the long-distance telephone later that night to a friend in Bombay. He told me that every body had gone to bed after a busy and animated session. When I asked about the next step he told me that just before retiring Gandhiji had, in the course of private discussion, announced his intention to make every effort to avoid a conflict and in any case to wait for three weeks at least, before advising action. At the very time that Gandhiji was thus unfolding in Bombay his plan of conciliation, the Viceroy's Council in New Delhi, at one of its extraordinary nightly sittings, was busy filling in the details on a decision arrived at some three weeks ago to put the Congress Working Committee under arrest as soon as the A. I. C. C. adopted its resolution. In sealing its earlier

decision the Government felt it no part of its duty to take into account the altered situation created by the numerous public statements made by responsible leaders in the preceding week. A long term policy had evidently been sanctioned and no thought of dangerous consequences could stand in the way of its execution. When the police party turned up in the early hours of the morning, Gandhiji was literally surprised. The grave disorder which spread immediately all over the country still continue in sporadic form, I for one was convinced from the very beginning, and I said so to foreign correspondents who cared to see me then, that the outbreak was not only spontaneous but would, on that very account, be serious. To speak of Congress responsibility for the violence and loss of Life (caused by the Government's military measures of the severest type) adds grave insult to injury. The position becomes ridiculous when the accusation is smugly levelled at leaders who were securely put away behind prison walls before the game of violence and counter-violence had started, and are still being kept there hermetically sealed against all contact with the outside world. They have no means of reply except through private petitions for mercy. Justice stands betrayed and so does the cause of the Allies in India".

The Cripps proposals failed not because of the Congress and Gandhiji but because they were so designed and desired from their very inception by their authors in Britain.

Gandhiji's position is very clear as can be seen from the following statements :—

Maulana Abul Kalam Azed, Congress President, stated on April 11th, 42 at the Press Conference :—

"Mahatma Gandhi's veiws as regards participation in any war are well-known and it would be entirely untrue to suggest that the Working Committee's decisions have in any way been influenced by that view. In fact, Mahatma Gandhi made it perfectly clear to the Working Committee that they were free to come to any decision on the merits of the proposals. Mahatmaji did not really want to participate in the earlier sittings of the Working Committee, but he was persuaded by me to stay on from day to day."

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru about the same on June 17th at Bombay said :—

"The statement of Sir Stafford to the effect that the Congress Working Committee had apparently accepted the proposals and it was only after further consultations with Mahatma Gandhi that they were turned down is entirely incorrect. It is true that the newspapers were making guesses, sometimes stating that the Congress Working Com-

mittee was likely to accept the proposals, but Sir Stafford ought to know that these newspaper stories had no basis".

Lastly Shri C. Rajgopalacharia declared :—

"Gandhiji is in prison and cannot again contradict this baseless story that will go into Hansard. I was present from beginning to end during these talks, and I can say authoritatively that Mahatmaji who was absent from Delhi during the later stages, was not responsible for anything that took place. In spite of Mahatmaji's adverse opinion expressed at the preliminary stage, the Working Committee entered into discussions with Sir Stafford and carried on according to their own policy and Mahatmaji did not interfere."

The Cripps proposals were unacceptable not only to the Congress but no other party in India was prepared to accept them as they stood. The Congress demand for really "National Government" was not at all met with Cripps proposals hence it was but proper for the Congress to reject them. The purpose of sending the Cripps mission and the cause of its failure are now well known not only to India but to America as well, for placating whose opinion the British Government was anxious.

How the Cripps mission reacted on India and the Congress and what were its direct consequences are the subject matter of a press conference which Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru addressed on 4th April, 1942 at New Delhi. This also amply ventilates Panditji's crushing reply to those who stigmatise Panditji as pro-Japanese.

The relevant extracts of it are given below :—

"India is the crux of the War to-day," said the Pandit, "Every party knew that India can only function effectively if the Indian people are enabled to function effectively. Every country realizes this with the exception of New Delhi and Whitehall".

Summing up the position as it emerged after the Cripps's negotiations, the Pandit said : "The average reaction in the mind of the Indian people will be irritation against the British Government. The issues before the Country are so grave that no responsible person can talk lightly about them or consider them in terms of bitter reactions. We cannot afford to be bitter. Bitterness clouds our minds and affects our Judgment in a grave crisis. The fundamental factor is, not what the British Government has done to us or what we have done to them; but the peril to India and what we are going to do about it. So in spite of all that has happened, we are not to embarrass the British war effort in India or the efforts of our American friends in India". The problem before them was how without participating in the war effort,

and without embarrassing the Government in their war effort, they should organize their war effort in their own way for a free and Independent India. That was a question which the A.I.C.C. had to consider and decide at the next meeting.

"We are not going to surrender to any invader" said Pandit Jawaharlal. He could not tolerate the idea that he or anybody else should sit idle while the battle for India was being fought between two foreign armies. He could not tolerate any passive attitude but how far he could go in a particular situation depended on the circumstances. The background, however, was quite clear—just as they had refused to give in to British Government during the last 22 years, they were not going to surrender to any invader. They would have to resist invasion to the uttermost—by non-co-operation, by resistance, and by embarrassing the invaders in every possible way which a widely spread population could do.

The duty of every Congressman, of everyone in the Country, said Pandit Jawaharlal, was to organize self-protection and self-sufficiency. There was a fundamental difference between the approach of the Congress and that of British Government in this matter. The Congress wanted to rely upon the people, but the British Government did not even now want to trust the people. Ultimately, it was only the state which could defend the Country in an armed way. They could not, for instance, raise a citizen army without the State's help. But what the Congress had already begun was an intensive programme of self-sufficiency and self-protection in rural areas mainly with the object of securing regional self-sufficiency in food, etc., if transport arrangements happened to fail. These units could not resist an invading army, but form the background of any resistance which they or the State might organize, they could try to prevent disorder and panic and help production. They had to organize the people for self-reliance—for looking after themselves.

Who is responsible for failure of the Cripps' negotiations? In answer to this question, Pandit Nehru explained in detail the various stages of the negotiations. If he had been asked just before his last interview with Sir Stafford Cripps he would have said that the chances of coming to an agreement were about 75%. At that interview, however, the full picture which Sir Stafford suddenly and for the first time, put before them of the proposals was such that he could not agree to it. "A big change had occurred somewhere in the middle" said the Pandit. It was obvious, he added, that there was some trouble between Sir Stafford and others. "Others were not us" said the Pandit amidst laughter.

Pandit Nehru went on to say "while it was my extreme

desire to find a way out and make India function effectively for defence and make the war a popular effort—so great was my desire that some things I have stood for during the last quarter of a century, things which I could never have imagined for a moment I would give up, I now agree to give up—I am convinced personally that it is impossible for us to agree to the proposals as they eventually emerged from the British Government's mind. I am in complete and whole hearted agreement with the Congress resolution and the letters of the Congress President."

"So far as I know India, and I know it tolerably well, the major sentiment in India naturally is one of hostility to the British in India. You can not root out 150 years of past history and all that has happened in those years. It has sunk deep down into the Indian soul. Suppose we had come to an agreement and had to convert, to change that sentiment suddenly we could have done it if we could have given a sensation of freedom to the people of India. The fundamental factor to-day is distrust or dislike of the British Government. It is not pro-Japanese sentiment. It is anti-British sentiment. That may occasionally lead individuals to pro-Japanese expression of views. This is short sighted. It is a slave's sentiment, a slave's way of thinking, to imagine that to get rid of one person who is dominating us we can expect another person to help us and not dominate us later. Freemen ought not to think that way. It distresses me that any Indian should talk of the Japanese liberating India. The whole past history of Japan has been one of dominating others. Japan comes here either for Imperialist reasons straight out or to fight with the British Government. Anyhow, whatever the reason, if it comes here, it does not comes here, to liberate."

"If an army comes here under the leadership of Subhas Bose what should be our reaction to it ?" was the next question.

Before answering the question the Pandit referred to the differences between Mr. Bose and the Congress, and said "I do not frankly doubt the bonafides of Mr. Bose. I think he has come to the conclusion which I think is wrong, but nevertheless a conclusion which he thinks is for the good of India. We parted company with him many years ago. We have drifted further apart and to-day we are very far apart. It is not good enough for me, because of my past friendship, because I do not challenge his motives, not to realize that the way he has chosen is utterly wrong, a way which I not only cannot accept but must oppose if it takes shape, because any force that may come from outside, it really comes as a

dummy force under the Japanese control. In effect it helps the invader. It may help under the mistaken notion that the invader will play fair. It is a bad thing psychologically for the Indian masses to think in terms of being liberated by an outside agency".

"I think," he continued "it is the job and function of every Indian to be in India to-day, to face the dangers and risks, whatever might happen in India."

The Cripps proposals were found so vere unsatisfactory that no section of Political party and public opinion agreed with them. They were universally condemned by almost all important political parties and personalities: Whether it was Muslim league, or the Momin Conference, or the depressed classes or Dr. Ambedkar, or Sir T. B. Sapru, or Dr. M. R. Jaykar. Thus it becomes evident that Cripps came not to appease and win over the hearts of the Indian people but only to add insult to the injury already inflicted on India by dragging her into the war without her consultation and consent.

CHAPTER IV

BURMA AND BRITISH ATROCITIES

It is since the last Government of India Act 1935 that Burma was separated from India which was a part of India since its annexation by the Government of India in 1885 after the Burmese War. In Burma the new constitution was introduced in accordance with the Act of 1935. The popular Premier of Burma Mr. U. Saw, at the beginning of the present World War, to fully yoke the resources of the country for complete support and through execution of the war, suggested and demanded independence for his country. His patriotism goaded him even to visit England in this connection where he clamoured for independence of his country for its really effective and timely defence. But alas! his voice was simply ignored and he was made a captive there. Since then nothing is heard of him. But his countrymen still remember him and the history of his country has a honoured place for him.

Soon after came the invasion of Burma by Japan. The British were found too weak to defend her. The whole country was in no time flooded over by the Japanese armies and the British rule in Burma was thrown to the winds.

The British population, both Civilian and Military, in Burma used all possible and available best means to leave for India without delay but the plight of the Indians in Burma became horrible. They could be neither here nor

there. Their British masters betrayed them and the Burmans who were themselves in trouble could hardly afford to help them. From the invading Japanese armies in those troublous time nothing better and helpful could be expected. There was no way out for the poor Indians but to attempt escape to India. But this was not an easy job. All the best available roads and conveyances were under the use of the British, and the Indians were prohibited to use them. Hence they were left with no other option but to take to the worst hilly and waterless track through the fierce woods where, on the way, many of them were simply starved and parched to death. As they had no means of conveyance and transport so most of them left their belongings and beloved children and old persons behind. Thus men of money and family were reduced to beggary without a family and hearth and home. We, hereunder, give an account of the Burma campaign by a British Civilian. Even from it glean out the facts which can be very well imagined by the intelligent readers:

"Mr. T. L. Hughes, in an address to the Central Asian Society on November 3, on the Burma campaign, gave the result of a careful research into the various reports and charges dealing with the civil side of the campaign. Mr. Hughes resigned from the Indian Civil Service in 1939 and became the Political Secretary to the Burma Chamber of Commerce. During part of the Burma campaign he was the Chief Liaison Officer to General Alexander. He has been Secretary to Sir Dorman Smith, Governor of Burma, for a year.

Mr. Hughes bluntly stated that much arrant nonsense has been said and written by alleged eye-witnesses of first-hand observers whose information in some instances at least would seem to have been collected in the bar of Calcutta's leading hotel. The over-riding fact was that the situation in Burma could be linked to that which existed in Great Britain at the time of the fall of France. But Great Britain's hastily improvised defence measures were never tested by the reality of invasion and she was given time to face up to the new threat. Burma, on the other hand, was given no such breathing space. Japanese troops invaded Burma's soil on December 9, just two days after Pearl Harbour.

Mr. Hughes said he could not too strongly emphasize that Burma was lost because our pitifully inadequate military forces were overwhelmed and outmanoeuvred by a superior enemy force. But it should not be forgotten what was achieved by the Burma campaign; our military forces in Burma fought a stubborn rearguard action for five vital months, vital in so

much that the breathing space enabled India to prepare for the threat of invasion.

Such actions or omissions for which the civil administration was responsible had no influence whatsoever on the result of the campaign. Only additional troops, tanks, guns and aeroplanes could have turned the tide. If it could be maintained that the civil administration utterly broke down, utterly failed to co-operate with the military, then some portion of the odium for the loss of Burma could deservedly be attached to the civilians. But, Mr. Hughes denied that this was so. On the contrary, the administrative machine kept going until the end inspite of numerous missing cogs in the wheel.

Evacuation of Refugees

Evacuation of refugees was undoubtedly the biggest problem facing the the civil officers. After the fail of Rangoon, our forces were by no means defeated, and General Alexander had not given up the hope of assuming an offensive. Had the civil officers ignored every issue save that of evacuation, it is not improbable that the provisioning of various evacuation routes with food and medical supplies would have made greater progress. But, what an edifying example they would have set to military forces and to essential workers and only with General Alexander's decision to withdraw to India did the realization come that our days in Burma were indeed numbered.

From statistics compiled at the various evacuation centres on the Indian frontier it would probably be a conservative estimate to put the total number of evacuees, who reached India, at 4,00,000. A supreme handicap in dealing with that pitiable mass of refugees was the uncertainty of the military situation. How many casualties there were during the evacuation could not be known. But, they seemed to be about 10,000 or $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the total number of evacuees. Such a casualty list is surprisingly small although, of course, it did not include many who died in cholera epidemic at Prome and Mandalay or who died in India after their arrival. The tale of that terrible trek, when it is told, would be a tale of sheer guts of ordinary men and women in the face of a disaster entitling them to a place on the same civilian roll of honour as the people in Britain who, in the dark days of 1940, showed that the country still produced a race of men and women worthy of their heritage."

Their tales of sufferings and miseries travelled fast and wide in India. From one corner to the other, whole

of India was moved at this miserable plight of her countrymen in Burma. The worst part of the whole tragedy was the treatment meted out to the Indians in Burma by the British Government of India and Burma.

The pathetic tales of the sufferings of the Indians in Burma were luridly narrated by the Indian evacuees and refugees from Burma. The very soul of India was stirred at the ghastly tragedy and the beastly inhuman treatment of the British towards the Indians and specially the invidious distinction they made between the Indians and the British. (It is for this reason that the Burma Evacuation Report was not published by the Government of India. But for its not publication, the reason assigned is, of course, quite different. In the session of the Central Assembly at New Delhi, on November 7, 1943, Dr. N. B. Khare, Indians Overseas Member in reply to the question of Sardar Mangal Singh said, "In the course of Mr. A. K. Chanda's work on the preparation of a consolidated report on the evacuation of Burma, it became apparent that it would be impossible to present a clear picture of the whole of operation without including matter that might be of great value to the enemy. The question has, therefore, been re-examined in the light of the existing military situation and after detailed consideration, the Government of India has decided not to publish any report on the subject for the present.") This was the rudest shock to the faith and feelings of the Indians in general. The feeling of resentment and frustration surcharged the hearts of the Indians. They were not only filled with hate and anger for the British but were also merged in anxiety and care for their own defence.

Every Indian could and did see a sad plight and sorry picture for himself and his country if there were an invasion of Japan on India. Specially the Indian people were very much terrified by the treacherous treatment of the British in Burma. Hence every Indian's heart was enflamed with burning desire to be free from the British control which was strangling the very life and liberty of the people and was a terrible obstacle in the way of India's defence against the Japanese attack. With the British rule in India, Indians could never be inspired to lay their lives for the defence of India which meant and correctly, the protection of her slavery and perpetuation of her subjection under the British authority. Hence logically and psychologically came the cry for India's independence and prepared the people for the very natural move of "Quit India" which was so opportunely suggested by Gandhiji—the real pulse-feeler of the people of India.

PART III

INDIA'S DEFENCE AND INDEPENDENCE

CHAPTER I

ALLAHABAD MEETING OF THE CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE

Since the fall and subsequent fate of Burma and specially of the Indians in Burma and thereafter the fiasco of Cripps Mission, Gandhiji began seriously considering about the defence of India. His mind's working was clearly expressed by him in his articles in the 'Harijan,' which were quite explicit and unambiguous. His main emphasis was on two points, firstly defence of India and not to fall in the hands of the aggressor and secondly to gain popular support for this and not depend entirely on the British Government in India whose weakness was manifested by its continuous failure in Malaya, Singapore, and Burma. The idea that Gandhiji or the Congress were pro-Japanese is false and fantastic. This we have also shown in one of our previous chapter and again we hereby support the same on the basis of various Congress resolutions and views of Gandhiji and Jawaharlalji as expressed by them. The Government of India, to vilify the Congress and Gandhiji, issued a communique through its Home Department, from New Delhi, on 5th August' 42 just on the eve of the memorable Bombay Session of the A.I.C.C. In this they have published an unauthorised and unauthentic record of the Allahabad Meeting of the Congress Working Committee (held from April 27th to May 1, 42) which was recovered in a subsequent police search of the A. I. C. C's office. Gandhiji was not present at this meeting, but he sent, for the consideration of the Working Committee, a draft resolution. Miraben who brought the draft, explained how Gandhiji's mind was working. The Committee gave earnest and careful consideration to the draft. But as regards the authenticity of the notes of that meeting which were taken by the Assistant Secretary of the A.I.C.C. and published in this communique of the Government and also about the attitude of Gandhiji towards Japan etc., we give below the statement of Jawahar Lal Nehru from Bombay on August 5th, 1942 :—

"I have just seen for the first time the Government's communique issuing certain documents obtained during a police raid from the A. I. C. C. office. It is astonishing to what a pass the Government of India has been reduced when it has to adopt these discreditable and dishonourable tactics. Normally, such tactics require no answer. But as there is likely to be misapprehension, I wish to clear up some matters.

It is not our custom to keep detailed minutes of Working Committee's meetings. Only final decisions are recorded. On this occasion, the assistant secretary took brief notes unofficially apparently for his own record. These notes are very brief and disjointed and represent several days' prolonged debate during which I must have spoken on various occasions for two or three hours. Only a few sentences were, taken down and torn from their context. They often give a wrong impression. None of us had a chance of seeing these notes or revising them. The record is very unsatisfactory and incomplete and hence often incorrect.

In our discussions, Mahatma Gandhi was not present. We had to consider every aspect of the question fully and to weigh the implications of words and phrases in the draft resolutions. If Gandhiji had been there, much of this discussion might have been avoided as he could have explained to us his attitude more fully.

Thus when the question of British withdrawal from India was considered, I pointed out that if the armed forces were suddenly withdrawn, the Japanese might well advance and invade the country without hindrance. The obvious difficulty was removed when Gandhiji later explained that British and other armed forces might remain to prevent aggression.

In regard to the statement that Gandhiji expected an Axis victory, an important qualification has been omitted. What he has repeatedly said and what I have referred to is his belief that unless Britain changes her whole policy in regard to India and her colonial possessions, she is heading for disaster. He has further stated that if a suitable change in this policy was made and the war really became one for freedom for all peoples, then victory would assuredly come to the United Nations.

The references to negotiations with Japan are also incorrect and entirely torn from their context. Gandhiji always sends notice to his adversary before coming into conflict. He would thus have called upon Japan not only to keep away from India, but to withdraw from China. In any event he was determined to resist every aggressor in India and he advised our people to do so even to the point of death. They were never to submit.

It is absurd to say that any of us envisaged any arragements with Japan giving her right of passage and other things. What I said was that Japan would want this, but we could never agree. Our whole policy has all along been based on uttermost resistance to aggression."

We also reproduce here the statement of Gandhiji on this communique with his answers to the questions put to him

in this connection. It clarifies Gandhiji's position in his own words and strongly refutes the Government's unfounded and imaginary allegations against him :—

"I want to make a remark or two about the manner in which the Government have got this document. I think that the procedure thus adopted of searching the A. I. C. C. offices and seizing documents was in itself reprehensible. The Congress is not an illegal organisation. Its representatives have, under the partial autonomy given by the Government of India Act, successfully administered seven large provinces of India, and so far as I am aware, without a single exception, the Governors of those provinces have nothing but praise for the considerable administrative talent and devotion to duty shown by the Ministers who were Congress representatatives. Such an organisation deserves, to say the least, a better treatment than the Government had accorded it by its procedure with the A. I. C. C.

Their action becomes more reprehensible when they make what I consider, illegitimate use of the douments seized. They might have had the courtesy of referring the document to the A. I C. C. and heard what the committee had to say before making public use thereof.

In spite of the effort of the Home Department to discredit the members of the Working Committee, the reading of the notes unauthenticated though they are, will not make any difference at least in India in the prestige which the Congress enjoys. There is nothing in it of which any member has any cause to be ashamed.

I do not know what should be the journalistic attitude of such use of documents seized in the manner I have shown and sprung upon an unsuspecting public at a most critical time both for the Government and the people. But I leave the profession to judge for itself."

Question 1. The whole inference of Nehru's statements in the documents is that your belief is that Japan and Germany will win the war. Does that represent your considered opinion ?

Answer : You have been good enough to show Pandit Nehru's statement on the document issued by the Government. After his full and frank explanation I hardly think I need answer your questions. I wholly agree with the opinion expressed by him. That however, is his own reaction to the draft resolution sent to the Working Committee. As the language of that draft shows, it had many I's to be dotted and T's to be crossed. It was sent through Miraben to whom I had explained the implications of the draft and I said to her or to the friends of the Working Committee who happened

to be in Sevagram to whom I had explained the draft, that there was an omission deliberate from my draft as to the foreign policy of the Congress and therefore any reference to China and Russia. For as I had said to them, I derived my inspiration and knowledge from Pandit Nehru about foreign matters of which he had been deep student. Therefore, I said that he could fill in that part in the resolution.

But I may add that I have never, even in a most unguarded moment, expressed the opinion that they cannot win the war, if only Great Britain will once for all shed her imperialism I have given expression to that opinion more than once in the columns of 'Harijan' and I repeat here that inspite of all my wish to the contrary and of others, if disaster overtakes Great Britain and the Allied powers, it will be because even at the critical moment—most critical in her history—obstinately refused to wash herself of the taint of imperialism which she has carried with her for at least a century and a half.

The suppressed races of the earth will never see the fine distinction that the Pandit and, following him, I can see and make between fascism and imperialism. The difference, if any, discerned by the man on the street will be not of kind but only of degree, and therefore I have pleaded and shall plead ever as I am fighting with all the earnestness. I command that Britain will shed the taint, and that her great ally America will make her do so, and then be sure of victory no matter how prolonged the struggle and what cost it requires.

To say the least then, the Allied powers will earn the blessings of dumb but countless millions, apart from the gaining men and material that the free association of these peoples will bring to the Allies. I would count their blessings to be of far higher value than every other consideration. I have, therefore, nothing to withdraw and nothing to be ashamed of about the draft I had the privilege of sending to the Working Committee.

Question 2. Pandit Nehru states that, according to your plans after British withdrawal, India would possibly negotiate with Japan and even allow her a large measure of civil control, military bases in India and right of passage for her troops ?

Answer : As to your second question, I can only say that you have put it because I regret to have to say you have not studied my writings in 'Harijan' before the draft was written and after. Having such confidence, for which many of my friends say I have no warrant, in the efficacy of the weapon of non-violent, non-co-operation with all its implications that I have presented to the nation, I maintain that I could not be guilty of harbouring any such thought you have attributed to me. Pandit Nehru has explained quite clearly what could

be his own meaning and interpretation of my draft. I add by way of emphasis that I had purposely incorporated the sentence about negotiations with Japan, and if ultimately it was dropped and I associated myself with the deletion, I did so out of my regard for my co-workers—not because I was uncertain as to what I meant to do. It is the essence of the use of the weapon that you will always give your opponent the oppurtunity of doing the right thing, and if India became an independent nation to-morrow and I was witness to the grand phenomenon, I would certainly advise and plead with the provisional government to send me—old as I am—to Japan and I would plead with her in the first instance to free China, her great neighbour, from the menace that Japan has become and tell her that if she does not do this elementary justice, she will have to count upon the stubborn resistance of millions who had at long last found themselves in possession of a thing which every nation prizes before everything else.

That gentle notice—or entreaty it should be called, because that entreaty will not be backed at least to-morrow with any military show, because I will not dangle before Japan the show that will still be made by the Allied powers whose operations will still go on in India with the free consent of India become free—will carry with it the power implied in the use of the matchless moral weapon of non-violent non-co-operation. And I am sure I will make the appeal not without hope of success. That was the meaning of the sentence the use of which at the present juncture is intended to bring discredit upon my devoted head. I shall take the discredit and so much the better if I can take India's freedom also with it."

In this connection Gandhiji wrote even in June 1942, in reply to a question as below :—

"The difficulty about the confusion in the public mind by the contemplated stay of the Allied troopes in the country is very real. Neither the masses nor even the classes will appreciate the necessity of military operations by the Allied powers after the declaration of withdrawal. But if the necessity is proved the public may be expected to reconcile themselves to the inevitable.

There was obviously a gap in my first writing. I filled it in as soon as it was discovered by one of my numerous interviewers. Non-violence demands the strictest honesty, cost what it may. The public have therefore to suffer my weakness. If weakness it may be called. I could not be guilty of asking the Allies to take a step which would involve certain defeat.

The writer's argument about Britain having no cause left

for pursuing the war, if she accepts my proposal and logically follows it in Africa, is sound. But that is the acid test proposed. India has every right to examine the implications of high-sounding declarations about justice, preservation of democracy and freedom of speech and individual liberty. Is India a democracy ? Are the States a democracy ? Britain does not deserve to win the war on the ground of justice if she is fighting to keep her Asiatic and African possessions. I am not unaware of the tremendous change in Britain's economic policy that the acceptance of my proposal involves. But that change is a vital necessity, if this war is to have a satisfactory ending.

Who knows if Britain's acceptance of my proposal will not by itself mean an honourable end of the war resulting in a change even in the mentality of the Axis powers ?

The writer is afraid that my reconciliation to the presence of the British troops would mean a descent on my part from my non-violent position. Neither Britain nor America share my faith in non-violence. I am unable to state that the non-violent effort will make India proof against Japanese or any other aggression. I am not able even to claim that the whole of India is non-violent in the sense required.

In the circumstances it would be hypocritical on my part to insist on the immediate withdrawal of the Allied troops as an indispensable part of my proposal. It is sufficient for me to declare that, so far as India is concerned, she does not need troops to defend herself, having no quarrel with Japan. But India must not by any act of hers short of national suicide let China down or put the Allied powers in jeopardy.

So long, therefore, as India lacks faith in the capacity of non-violence to protect her against aggression from without, the demand for the withdrawal of the Allied troops during the pendency of the war would itself be an act of violence, if the controllers of the troops hold it to be necessary for their defence to keep them in India for that purpose and that alone."

In this very connection Gandhiji wrote in 'Harijan' a week previous to the above also which we reproduce below :—

"If I am impatient of the British yoke, I am so because India's sullenness and the suppressed delight of the man in the street over British reverses are dangerous symptoms which may lead to the success of Japanese designs upon India. India finding herself in possession of complete freedom will never want the Japanese to enter India. India's sullenness and discontent will be changed as if by magic into joyful and hearty co-operation with the Allies in consolidating and preserving her liberty from any and every evil design."

The intention of the Congress is very distinctly and

unmistakably expressed in the various resolutions passed by the Congress Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. They all are consistent and boldly voicing the same thoughts and feelings. This will be clear from the following quotations :—

1. Extract from the draft of Rajendra Babu. Allahabad, dated April 27, '42.

"But if Japan attacks India and Britain makes no response to its appeal the Committee would expect all those who look to Congress for guidance to offer complete non-violent non-co-operation to the Japanese forces and not render any assistance to them. It is no part of the duty of those who are attacked to render any assistance to the attacker. It is their duty to offer complete non-co-operation.

It is not difficult to understand the simple principle of non-violent non-co-operation :—

1. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor nor obey any of his orders.

2. We may not look to him for any favours nor fall to his bribes. But we may not bear him any malice nor wish him ill.

3. If he wishes to take possession of our fields we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist him.

4. If he is attacked by disease or is dying of thirst and seeks our aid we may not refuse it.

5. In such places where the British and Japanese forces are fighting our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary. At present our non-co-operation with the British Government is limited. Were we to offer them complete non-co-operation when they are actually fighting, it would be tantamount to placing our country deliberately in Japanese hands. Therefore not to put any obstacle in the way of the British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the Japanese. Neither may we assist the British in any active manner. If we can judge from their recent attitude, the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference. They desire our help only as slaves—a position we can never accept.

2. Extract from the A. I. C. C. Resolution May, 1 1942.

"The Committee repudiates the idea that freedom can come to India through interference or invasion by any foreign nation, whatever the professions of that nation may be. In case an invasion takes place it must be resisted. Such resistance can only take the form of non-violent non-co-operation as the British Government has prevented the organization of national defence by the people in any other

way. The Committee would therefore expect the people of India to offer complete non-violent non-co-operation to the invading forces and not to render any assistance to them. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor nor obey any of his orders. We may not look to him for favours nor fall to his bribes. If he wishes to take possession of our homes and our fields we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist them. In places wherein the British and the invading forces are fighting our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary. Not to put any obstacle in the way of British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the invader. Judging from their attitude the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference."

3. Extract from the text of the Resolution adopted by the Congress Working Committee at Wardha on 14th July, 1942.

"India in bondage can play no effective part in defending herself and in affecting the fortunes of the war that is desolating humanity. The freedom of India is thus necessary not only in the interest of India but also for the safety of the world and for the ending of Nazism, Fascism, militarism and other forms of imperialism, and the aggression of one nation over another. Ever since the outbreak of the world war, the Congress has studiedly pursued a policy of non-embarrassment. Even at the risk of making its satyagraha in-effective, it deliberately gave it a symbolic character in the hope that this policy of non-embarrassment carried to its logical extreme would be duly appreciated and that real power would be transferred to popular representatives so as to enable the nation to make its fullest contribution towards the realisation of human freedom throughout the world, which is in danger of being crushed. It had also hoped that negatively nothing would be done which was calculated to tighten Britain's hold on India.

These hopes have, however, been dashed to pieces. The abortive Cripps' proposals showed in the clearest possible manner that there was no change in the British Government's attitude towards India and that the British hold on India was in no way to be relaxed. In the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, Congress Representatives tried their utmost to achieve a minimum, consistent with the national demand, but to no avail. This frustration has resulted in a rapid and wide-spread, increase of ill-will against Britain and a growing satisfaction at the success of Japanese arms.

The Working Committee view this development with

grave apprehension as this, unless checked, will inevitably lead to a passive acceptance of aggression. The Committee hold that all aggression must be resisted, for any submission to it must mean the degradation of the Indian people and the continuation of their subjection. The Congress is anxious to avoid the experience of Malaya, Singapore, and Burma and desires to build up resistance to any aggression on or invasion of India by the Japanese or any foreign Power. The Congress would change the present ill-will against Britain into good-will and make India a willing partner in a joint enterprise of securing freedom for the nations and people of the world and in the trials and tribulations which accompany it. This is only possible if India feels the glow of freedom."

4. Extract from the Text of the Resolution adopted by the A. I. C. C. on 8th August, 1942, at Bombay.

"The immediate ending of British rule in India is an urgent necessity, both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable of defending herself and of contributing to the cause of world freedom.

The Committee has viewed with dismay the deterioration of the situation of the Russian and Chinese peoples, and expressed its high appreciation of their heroism in defence of their freedom. The increasing peril makes it incumbent on all those who strive for freedom and who sympathise with the victims of aggression, to examine the foundations of the policy so far pursued by the Allied Nations, which have led to repeated and disastrous failure. It is not by adhering to such aims and policies and methods that failure can be converted into success, for past experience has shown that failure is inherent in them. These policies have been based not on freedom so much as on the domination of subject and Colonial countries, and the continuation of the Imperialist tradition and method. The possession of Empire, instead of adding to the strength of the ruling power, has become a burden and curse. India, the classic land of modern Imperialism, has become curx of the question, for by the freedom of India will Britain and the United Nations be judged, and the peoples of Asia and Africa be filled with hope and enthusiasm.

The ending of British rule in this country is thus a vital and immediate issue on which depend the future of the war and the success of freedom and democracy. A free India assures this success by throwing all her great resources in the struggle for freedom and against the aggression of Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism. This will not only affect materially

the fortunes of the war, but will bring all subject and oppressed humanity on the side of the United Nations, and give these nations, whose ally India would be, the moral and spiritual leadership of the world. India in bondage will continue to be the symbol of British Imperialism and the taint of that imperialism will affect the fortunes of all the United Nations.

The peril of today, therefore, necessitates the independence of India and the ending of British domination. No future promises or guarantees can affect the present situation or meet that peril. They cannot produce the needed psychological effect on the mind of the masses. Only the glow of freedom now can release that energy and enthusiasm of millions of people which will immediately transform the nature of war.

The A. I. C. C., therefore, repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India. On the declaration of India's independence, a provisional Government will be formed and free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom.........Freedom will enable India *to resist aggression* effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it."

The Congress position has been clear and consistent. As regards some superficial difference in Gandhiji and Jawaharlal ji, it should be remembered that Gandhiji has always regarded Jawaharlalji as his guide in foreign and international affairs. Gandhiji is always influenced by the views of Jawaharlalji in his decision about the foreign policy. Gandhiji in his first speech in the A. I. C. C. at Bombay said "I derive my inspiration and knowledge from Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru about foreign matters of which he has been a deep student. Therefore I said that he would fill in that part of the resolution." But the personal and private considerations of the statesmen should not be made use of publicly nor mere confidential primary consultations be taken as final opinions and policy of any political leader or organization. Hence Allahabad discussions of the Congress Working Committee members among themselves of which an incomplete and unauthentic account is published by the Government should not be attached any more importance and meaning than is expressed in the subsequent resolutions of the Congress Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. and the statements of the Congress leaders which we have quoted above. They have no doubt about the Congress position and policy which was one of effective opposition to any design of aggression on India by Japan. There is not a word which smacks of pro-Japanese sentiment in the Congress resolutions. Further the Congress intentions

and its policy as was propounded and explained by Gandhiji and Jawaharlalji and other leaders is also quite free from any smell of pro-Japanese sentiment. All along there has been a burning desire for the defence of India and to make it really effective. A bold claim for independence of India was made by Gandhiji in his suggestion which he sent for the consideration of the Working Committee Meeting at Allahabad from April 27th to May 1, 1942. The members present in that Working Committee Meeting at Allahabad could not have a chance to discuss and understand clearly Gandhiji's own views nor could he have a chance to learn and appreciate the views of them. Gandhiji always expressed that Jawaharlalji was his guide in international affairs. The question of allowing or agreeing to the stationing of Allied troops in India was not finally decided nor could it be done unless it should have been discussed thoroughly with Gandhiji and other members of the Congress Working Committee. Hence at the very first opportunity when it was discussed, the decision was announced in clear words as below in the resolution passed at Wardha :—

"It is the earnest desire of the Congress to enable India to resist aggression effectively with the peoples' united will and strength behind it. In making the proposal for the withdrawal of the British rule from India, the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied Powers in their prosecution of the war or in any way to encourage aggression on India or increase pressure on China by the Japanese or any other Power associated with the Axis group. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the Allied powers.

The Congress is, therefore, agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the Allies in India, should they so desire, in order to ward off and resist Japanese or other aggression and to protect and help China. The proposal, of withdrawal of the British power from India was never intended to mean the physical withdrawal of all Britishers from India, certainly not of those who would make India their home and live there as citizens and as equals with the others. If such a withdrawal takes place with good-will it would result in the establishing of a stable provisional government in India and co-operation between this government and the United Nations in resisting aggression and helping China. The Congress realises that there may be risks involved in such a course. Such risks, however, have to be faced by any country in order to achieve freedom, and more especially at the present critical juncture in order to save the country and the larger cause of freedom from far greater risks and perils. While, therefore, the Congress is

impatient to achieve the national purpose it wishes to take no hasty steps and would like to avoid, in so far as is possible, any course of action that might embarrass the United Nations. The Congress would be pleased with the British Power if it accepts the very reasonable and just proposal herein made not only in the interest of India but also that of British and of the cause of freedom to which the United Nations proclaim their adherence. Should, however, this appeal fail the Congress cannot view without the gravest apprehension the continuation of present state of affairs involving a progressive deterioration in the situation and the weakening of India's will and power to resist aggression."

The main and central idea guiding the movement of "*Quit India*" was one and only one which was repeatedly expressed and explained by Gandhiji and in the Congress resolutions. It was: "The immediate ending of British rule in India is an urgent necessity both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is ***degrading and enfeebling*** India and making her ***progressively less capable of defending*** herself and of contributing to the cause of the world freedom......... Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the peoples' united will and strength behind it." In short it was, that ***Independence*** of India was ***absolutely*** essential for her effective defence. "It is clearly expressed in the Congress resolution itself: "Future promises cannot produce the needed psychological effect on the mind of the masses. Only the *glow of* freedom now can release that energy and enthusiasm of millions of people which will immediately transform the nature of the war."

Thus for India's defence when her independence was considered essential by the Congress it very emphatically and boldly expressed its proposal that ***British rule in India must end immediately.*** This proposal was an appeal of India to Britain and the United Nations. Gandhiji addressed personal letters to Marshal Chiang-Kai-Shek, President Roosevelt and an open letter to every Briton and every Japanese; and lastly his last address to the A. I. C. C. at Bombay on 8th August, '42, Gandhiji declared: "We shall make every effort to see the Viceroy before starting the struggle."

The struggle which the A. I. C. C. sanctioned at Bombay was ***on non-violent lines*** on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilize ***all the non-violent strength*** it has gathered during the last 22 years of ***peaceful struggle.*** Again the people of India were given clear instructions "***to hold together under the leadership of Gandhiji*** and carry out

his instructions. Further they were reminded that they must remember that "*non-violence is the basis of this movement.*"

So far as the Congress is concerned its resolutions are very clear in their motives and aims. There was absolutely no ambiguity in their meaning or purpose. Hence to allege or attribute any other motive or meaning to them than they expressly declare is not "just and honest". The motive was clear and definite. It can be expressed in short as "Independence of India is essential for her ***effective*** defence." Hence it was resolved to sanction, for the vindication of India's unalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of ***mass struggle on non-violent lines.***

As regards Gandhiji, he was anxious to avoid any conflict with the Government, hence his declaration to see the Viceroy and his various letters to leaders and the people of the world. Non-violence has been his article of faith and he stuck to it so far he had the freedom and was not clapped in jail when, of course, he could and should have done nothing. Still he could not keep mum and he held correspondence with the Viceroy (Published in the appendices) when he failed to get reasonable consideration at the hands of the Viceroy, and he being left to no other choice, still he, as a true Satyagrahi and a votary of non-violence and truth, decided to fast for 21 days, in his such an old age, as a measure of self-suffering and penance.

It now stands amply proved that neither the Congress nor Gandhiji can even remotely be held responsible for the happenings after his and other Congress leaders' arrest on the 9th August, 1942.

The motives of the Congress resolution are very-clear as discussed above. It was never the motive of the Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji to seek an opportunity in Britian's danger. The whole life-history of Gandhiji speaks contrary to this unimaginable and false allegation against him, his followers and the Congress. He was all along, even from the beginning of this war, avoiding any embarrassment or hindrance in the war-efforts of the Government. He followed a policy of neuterality and let the Government carry on its own plan and scheme of war. Why ? Because he did not deem proper to put any obstacle in the way of the Government specially when they were involved in a life and death struggle. But this movement, he was forced to start by the circumstances which were created by the entry and victories of Japan in the war and the conduct of the British Government in all the struggles which they fought with Japan. Specially the behaviour of the British in Burma was the immediate

and strong cause of shaking the faith of Gandhiji and the Congress in the British might and even intention to save India from Japanese or any foreign aggression. Hence Gandhiji was left with no other choice but to advise the Congress and country to take to a drastic and even risky step of launching a movement for freedom of India from the British rule. The motive was very clear that let the Indian people be left free before actually they fall into the real trouble of facing the double devastation that is both from the Japanese attacking and British retreating armies. However, unarmed and weak Indian people were, they should have been allowed a fair chance to organise their own defence and be prepared in their own way to face death and destruction. The motive of the Congress and Gandhiji was not, and could never be, to hamper the war efforts by paralysing the administration of the country. It was only one, and one that of organising the country and arousing the enthusiasm of the people of India by actually letting them have the *glow of freedom* to defend and die for their country and liberty. An administration commanding no confidence and good-will of the people of the country can have only mercenary soldiers to fight in the battle-field but not the real defenders of their country who could lay their lives in the battle-field as a duty bound delight. The real motive of the Congress and Gandhiji was to turn the present armies of mercenary soldiers at the command of the Government into a real militia of the fighters for protecting the freedom of their motherland. The British Government did not realise the importance of this fact and persistently ignored and insulted this very vital sentiment of the people of India. Hence the Congress and Gandhiji were driven to the desperate path of dread and dangers. But this was not adopted by the Congress and Gandhiji at option but being deprived of any other choice. How could the Congress, Gandhiji and other leaders be idle spectators to the devastation and destruction of their country by the external foreign invaders and internal foreign rulers! Hence what the Congress contemplated in its Bombay decision was the only right course.

As regards the question of violence and non-violence, the point raised by the Government and the Congress critics is absolutely irrelevant. The Bombay A.I.C.C. resolution is quite clear on the point. It emphatically declares: "Its (the Provisional Government) primary function must be to defend India and resist aggression with all *the armed* as well as the non-violent forces at its command *together with its Allied powers*... The provisional Government, if would not

even, undertake to defend India, what else would it do? Who would be opposed to this? Where does the question arise of *committing the provisional Government in advance to any particular course of action*, in this simple question of fundamental policy in which there could never be two opinions. It is a very simple narration of a fact in which there could never be any chance of difference of opinion among same people who are required to run a Government and are willing to be governed by an organised Government of their own formation. This is a bad logic and a very very untenable argument to say in this connection that "the Congress cannot commit the Government in advance." Again to criticise Gandhiji for "his little belief in the effectiveness of non-violence as a means of resisting Japanese invasion" and at the same time to quote his orders for fixing for a Satyagrahi in the individual and symbolic Satyagrah of 1940-41, the slogan, "it is a sin to help in the *armed war* with men or money" with the object that the Congress was wedded to the policy of non-violence which was not effective in the matter of India's defence is nothing but sophistry. A policy is never set for all times and under all circumstances. The Congress has followed a policy of non-violence in its internal struggles with the British Indian Government but it never committed itself to a policy of non-violence for her external defence nor laid down that there will be no armies in Independent India. Hence all this is a very sad and bad logic which is being employed by the Government Propaganda Machinery. The Congress position is quite clear. Gandhiji's personal faith in non-violence is not the Congress creed. Gandhiji and the Congress are not indentical in this matter. If Gandhiji could have his way and could carry all the people with him, despite their human short-comings, he would certainly like to do away with arms and armies but it does not mean what he holds as his personal faith and principles they are all followed by the Indian National Congress. On the other hand Gandhiji himself declared in his draft of Allahabad Resolution:—

"In such places where the British and Japanese forces are fighting, our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary. At present our non-co-operation with the British Government is limited. Were we to offer them complete non-co-operation when they are actually fighting, it would be tantamount to placing our country deliberately in Japanese hands. Therefore not to put any obstacles in the way of the British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the Japanese."

11

It means nothing else but this that in the midst of violence on both serving sides "Non-violent resisters" cannot effectively resist or help from either side. It neither expresses ineffectiveness of non-violence nor shows any abhorrence for violence.

It may be stated without fear of contradiction that the Congress resolution of Bombay was an honest attempt for the *effective defence of India* in case of any foreign aggression and for the same purpose a bold bid for Independence of India. But certainly it was neither the intention nor motive of the Congress, much less of Gandhiji, to stab in the back of the Government of India when the foreign enemy was expected to invade India. Had this been the motive or attempt of the Congress, it would have rather been suicidal and detrimental to the best interest of the country which the Congress claims to advocate.

CHAPTER III

CONTEMPLATED CHARACTER CF THE MOVEMENT

In the previous chapters an attempt has been made to show the motives underlying the "Quit India" move and to put forward the logical and psychological development in a very natural sequence leading finally and irresistibly to the decision which Congress was forced to take at Bombay under Gandhiji's leadership. We now proceed to critically and unprejudicially examine the nature of the steps which Gandhiji could have advised the country to take, should the British not accede to his suggestion for their voluntary withdrawal.

It is needless to quote Gandhiji to show that he regarded his move as a final struggle of his life. But at the same time it should not be ignored that Gandhiji's struggle was going to be *non-violent* which has its own peculiar technique and plan. They are quite different from violent war-fare. Hence it is very difficult for those to appreciate them who are given to understand only *violent and violent* warfare. It is really impossible to understand and still worse to appreciate "non-violent struggle" for those whose purpose is served only by misunderstanding and misinterpreting it. The similar is the case of the British Government and its able advisers. But still to properly understand the contemplated *character and programme of the movement* we would quote Gandhiji himself.

The very first and fundamental thing which should be clearly understood is that Gandhiji never, never even in dream desired change of Masters that is Japanese occupation

of India or even its help in the removal of the British rule from India. Hence despite his faith in the principle of non-violence he accepted the retention of the Allied troops in India and clearly wrote in "Harijan" as early as in June 1942, replying to a correspondent :—

"I could not guarantee fool proof non-violent action to keep the Japanese at bay. Abrupt withdrawal of the allied troops might result in Japan's occupation of India and China's sure fall. I had not the remotest idea of any such catastrophe resulting from my action. Therefore, I feel that if in spite of the acceptance of my proposal it is deemed necessary by the Allies to remain in India to prevent Japanese occupation, they should do so, subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by any national Government that may be set up after the British withdrawal."

Further Gandhiji on the Resolution of the Congress Working Committee which was later passed on the 8th August in the A. I. C. C. at Bombay gave an interview to the Associated Press at Bombay on 6th August '42, in which he said :—

"The emphasis in any non-violent struggle, projected or in operation, is always on peace ; war, when it becomes an absolute necessity.

I have definitely contemplated an interval between the passing of the Congress resolution and the starting of the struggle. I do not know that what I contemplate doing according to my wont can be in any way described as in nature of negotiation. But a letter will certainly go to the Viceroy, not as an ultimatum but as an earnest pleading for avoiding conflict. If there is favourable response, then my letter can be the basis for negotiation.

Whether people believe it or not, I must confess that in non-violent action God is the decisive factor. Whatever strength I possess is not my own. Every ounce of it comes from God who does not dwell in the clouds up above but who dwells in every fibre of my being. Therefore, it is very difficult for me to speak with precision of say General Wavell who thinks that his dispositions and calculations must be such and can be made such that they cannot be overriden by any unknown and intangible power called God or Truth or whatever other name human fancy chooses to give to that power.

You are right, however, when you say that for a swift ending a general strike is necessary. It is put outside my contemplation, but seeing that I shall take every step in terms of my oft-repeated declaration that mass struggle is not conceived in any mimical spirit I shall move with utmost

caution. If a general strike becomes a dire necessity, I shall not flinch."

The above quotations gives an idea of Gandhiji's mind's working about the movement and his anxiety for avoiding any conflict with the Government.

Gandhiji's criticism of the Government policy of arrest and repression, as was expressed in his letter of 12th August, '42, to the Viceroy after his arrest, gives very clearly Gandhiji's plan and character of his movement. We quote the relevant extract from it below :—

"The Government of India were wrong in precipitating the crisis. The Government resolution justifying this step is full of distortions and misrepresentations.

The Government of India should have waited at least till the time I inaugurated mass action. I have publicly stated that I fully contemplated sending you a letter before taking concrete action. It was to be an appeal to you for an impartial examination of the Congress case. As you know, the Congress has readily filled in every omission that has been discovered in the conception of its demand. So could I have dealt with every difficulty if you had given me the opportunity.

Violence was never contemplated at any stage. A definition of what could be included in non-violent action has been interpreted in a sinister and subtle manner, as if the Congress was preparing for violent action. Everything was openly discussed among Congress circles, for nothing was to be done secretly.

The Congress movement was intended to evoke in the people the measures of sacrifice sufficient to compel attention. It was intended to demonstrate what measure of popular support it had. Was it wise at this time of the day to seek to suppress a popular movement avowedly non-violent.

The Congress has not approached the movement with any but the friendliest motives. Congress seeks to kill imperialism as much for the sake of the British people and humanity as for India.

The Government's answer to the Congress demand is hasty repression, they will not wonder if I draw the inference that it was not so much the Allied cause that weighed with the British Government, as the unexpressed determination to cling to the possession of India as an indispensable part of the imperial policy. This determination led to the rejection of the Congress demand and precipitated repression. The present mutual slaughter on a scale never before known to history is suffocating enough.

I would still plead for reconsideration of the Government

of India's whole policy. Do not disregard the pleading of one who claims to be a sincere friend of the British people. Heaven guide you."

From foregoing quotations it is quite clear that Gandhiji's contemplated movement had fundamentally non-violence as its basis. Its plan and programme were as open as ever and there was absolutely no secrecy about them. It was to be a mass movement, in case no settlement could be arrived at with the Government, but of the same variety as all his previous movements were excepting that it was to be more intensive and more extensive, so it should have been, because the demand was also much more than ever before. Naturally Gandhiji should have appealed and exhorted to his countrymen for maximum sacrifice in several terms. The same was repeated by all his lieutenants but in a very vague and uncertain terms. There was no clear cut programme or any definite scheme in the mind of any leader including Gandhiji. To him the scheme of his non-violent struggle unfolds itself automatically at the proper time and he never lays it down elaborately and precisely like the modern Generals conducting the violent warfare. He believes in "God" and gets his inspiration from him. He has very clearly expressed this as is quoted above. So to impute any sort of motives of secrecy or hidden plan of work to Gandhiji is not only wrong and false but is most mischievous. As regards other leaders and members of the Congress Working Committee, they knew nothing more than the general public and they gave no other plan than what Gandhiji expressed through his writings and speeches. In all the speeches of the leaders during that period there was only one thing which was expressed with all the emphasis at their command, and it was an exhortation and appeal to the people to be prepared to *sacrifice and suffer.* To allege that the Congress planned any secret and violent movement is absolutely false and mischievous and cannot be proved by facts. The whole history and activities of the Congress have been such that there is not an iota of sense and reason in suspecting Congress of planning a secret and violent movement. The Congress and Gandhiji always condemned both and never encouraged or favoured either. Under such a back-ground how could the Congress and Gandhiji in a sort of a fit or a miracle change the policy and programme of the Congress and convert all the people to follow the path of violence and secrecy! This, from its very face appears as imaginary and unreal as a day-dream. Then the Congress is not a child's play which could lightly launch upon any policy and programme. It has been guiding the destinies of the whole people of

the country and it has been enjoying the fullest confidence of its people so much so that it was entrusted with the administration of seven provinces of the country at a time and for years together. So how could such a responsible and influential body as the Congress contemplate and advise a course of action to the people of the country which may not only lead to a sure failure but may even result into a saddest disaster for the people! Again, what violence can the people of India think of doing when they are capable of doing nothing! They have no armies then how can they dare invite the brutal might of so very powerful a Government as the British Government of India, well equipped with arms and armies, to crush the unarmed and innocent people of the country. We quote below an extract from a writing of Mr. James Maxton in Manchester Guardian, September 12, 1942:—

"I do not believe any Indian politician, any supporter of Congress, any average Indian ever did anything to burn a policeman. Neither the Prime Minister nor the Secretary of State for India had the slightest desire to give self-government to India at all. It was part of the political philosophy of the Herrenvolk."

There were no secret meetings held in the country before the arrest of Gandhiji and other leaders and workers of the Congress. No secret circulars were issued to the workers or the people. Everything was open and public. There was no definite programme and no detailed instructions issued to the workers and the people. Everybody was in the dark about the work ahead and was simply looking at Gandhiji for guidance. Even leaders like Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru could give no programme and no instructions. All leaders and prominent workers were taken away leaving people without any programme and plan of work. This is proved by the subsequent events. All what happened in the country was the mere result of the ruthless and indiscriminate repression of the Government which was persued by the Government in a sort of frenzy which the Government displayed just on the passing of the resolution by the A.I.C.C. at Bombay. But for all that the Government was planning and preparing from the moment it learnt of the intended Congress move from Gandhiji's writings. Before we proceed to deal in detail with the Government plans to pounce upon the Congress, we may conclude this chapter by explaining very clearly the motives of the "Quit India" move.

The idea originated into the mind of Gandhiji with the British defeat and behaviour in Burma. No doubt there were two principal motives by which Gandhiji was actuated. The

first was his serious concern about the really ***effective defence of India*** in case of Japanese invasion and secondly to obtain the ***freedom of India*** without the glow of which millions of people could never be enthused and energised to take bold plunge into the war and transform the nature of war. The people could never be enthused to fight for the defence of their slavery. Really the main motive of Gandhiji and of the Congress was to save India from that lot which fell on the people of Burma, Malaya, Indo China and Dutch Indies or Iran and that too not only in the interest of the people of India but in the real interest of ***freedom front*** of the world for which the Allies claim and proclaim to fight. India's slavery is the insignia of the British imperialism which gives added strength and even justification for the Japanese invasion of India. None could have a design to invade ***Free India*** when it should have borne no enemity with any country and thus Free India not only would have been no liability on British might for her defence but would have been a positive source of strength for the Allied cause and could effectively render both moral and material help both to China and Russia and could play an important part in liberating all such countries as Malaya, Burma, Indo China, Dutch Indies etc. Further Free India could be successful not only in terminating this disastrous war but also in establishing permanent peace for the world. These were the motives which really inspired Gandhiji to advise the Congress to demand the withdrawal of British Government from India. He contemplated to plunge the country into a mass non-violent movement in which he demanded the maximum of suffering and sacrifices from his people not merely for ending the British rule in India or obtaining freedom for India alone but for the ***world freedom and world peace.*** Why these pious motive and high ideals were deliberately misinterpreted by the British Government in India and why the intended mass struggle on non-violent lines which was sanctioned by the A.I.C.C. at Bombay was never allowed to be actually started by the Government are the questions, the answers of which are not difficult to find out because the imperialism has not withdrawn voluntarily—it only perishes. Correctly Churchill said "I have not become the King's First Minister in order to preside at the liquidation of the British Empire."

PART IV

THE AUGUST MOVEMENT 1942

CHAPTER I

THE GOVERNMENT PLAN TO POUNCE UPON THE CONGRESS

Gandhiji had clearly declared his intention to make every effort to avoid a conflict. He had definitely contemplated an interval between the passing of the Congress resolution and starting of the struggle. In any case he intended to wait at least for three weeks before advising action. In his own words, "the emphasis in any non-violent struggle, projected or in operation, is always on peace; war, when it becomes an absolute necessity." At that very time when Gandhiji was thus unfolding in Bombay his plan of conciliation, the Viceroy's Council in New Delhi, at one of its extraordinary nightly sittings, was busy filling in the details on a decision arrived at some three weeks earlier to put the Congress Working Committee under arrest as soon as the A. I. C. C. adopted its resolution.

On one side Gandhiji even after the passage of the Resolution by the A. I. C. C. at Bombay on the night of August 8, declared that he would write to the Viceroy intimating to him the contents of the resolutions and the implications thereof but on the other side the Government of India on the very night of Aug. 8, 1942, just after the A. I. C. C. ratified the Working Committee Resolution at Bombay, published the Resolution of the Governor-General-in-Council in which the Congress resolution was declared "challenge" and hence their determination to meet it. It is stated therein :—

"There is nothing that the Government of India regret more than this challenge at so critical a juncture. But on them there lies the task of defending India, of maintaining India's capacity to wage war, of safeguarding India's interests, of holding the balance between the different section of her people without fear or favour. That task the Government of India will discharge in face of the challenge now thrown down by the Congress Party with clear determination, but with an anxiety that action shall be preventive of the interruption of the war effort and the other dangers to which they have referred rather than punitive and with a full consciousness of the responsibility to India and to the cause of the Allies and of civilisation. Their duty is plain and they have to discharge it, profoundly as they must deplore the situation which they have been called upon to face."

For the above decision Government gave in this very resolution the following justification :—

"The Governor-General-in-Council has been aware too, for some days past of dangerous preparations by the Congress Party for unlawful, and in some cases violent, activities, directed, among other things, to the interruption of communications and public utility services, the organisation of strikes, tampering with the loyalty of Government servants and interference with defence-measures, including recruitment.

The Government of India have waited patiently in the hope that wiser counsels might prevail. They have been disappointed in that hope. To a challenge such as the present there can only be one answer."

That one answer was repression, suppression and extreme barbarity on the innocent, non-violent and unarmed people of India. The Government waited so long after the Allahabad meeting of the A. I. C. C. held from April 27 to May 1, 1942 not because they wanted to give time to the Congress to reconsider but for their own preparation and securing pretext to pounce upon the Indian National Congress and the people of India. They found a justification in the passage of the August resolution of the Congress at Bombay to pounce upon the Congress and the Indian people in an indiscriminate and inhuman manner. The Government resolution alleged that they were aware for some days past of "*dangerous preparations*" by the Congress party for unlawful and in some cases violent activities. But so far the Government has given no proof of this baseless allegation against the Congress nor the facts go even to the extent of creating any doubt about such preparation by the Congress. Neither the Congress organisation nor its leaders and workers even know any plan or programme of the movement which were hidden in the innerself of Gandhiji alone. Gandhiji's plans have all along been revealed to him by his own instinct, not evolved by the cold calculating logic of the mind. His inner voice is his mentor and monitor, his friend, philosopher and guide. So to charge, the Congress under Gandhiji of any previous plans and dangerous preparations is not only false but mischievous. Really speaking even the closest associates of Gandhiji knew no plans and worked out no programme. All were looking to Gandhiji for guidance. Everybody was expecting some instructions and details of the programmes which were never issued directly or indirectly, openly or secretly by the Congress or anyone of its leaders right upto first and final blow of the Government on the Congress by arresting its leaders etc.

Throughout the period from the inception of the idea of "Quit India move" to the passage of the "August Resolution" the people in India were kept in unexpectant mood without any definite plan or programme. The leaders only exhorted the people to be prepared for the maximum sacrifice but nothing beyond that. Hence the arrest of Gandhiji with other leaders and thousands of Congress workers was a terrible surprise to the Country as a whole. The preparations were made by the Government with minutest details and descriptions long before. At one and the same time throughout the Country, all the Congress workers, office-bearers and Congress members of the Indian Legislatures were arrested in the early hours of the morning of the 9th August, 1942. This day will ever be remembered as the red-letter day in the history of India. The Government actually pounced upon the Congress and the Indian people with all their force and fury. The warrants of arrests were issued much before the 9th of August. The lists of those to be arrested in the first, second and third round were elaborately prepared. The ubiquitous and all powerful police was fully authorised and entrusted with the job of not only arresting and detaining the persons of the lists previously prepared but any one they desired. Thus the first reply to the Congress resolution and demand was the whole-sale arrest of the thousands of the Congressmen while most of them were actually sleeping in their homes. Even Gandhiji was not expecting this sudden outburst of the Government frenzy. He was really taken in surprise and caught in his own cage. He simply smiled and walked upto the Police Car and the same happened with the other leaders. The people in general throughout the Country heard the news of these arrests and gathered together on the streets in surprise, curiosity and a sort of anxiety. They had no programme and no plans of work. They simply resorted to the simple non-violent method of expression of their feeling for such occasion. Hartals were observed and peaceful processions and public meetings were announced. But the Government had their own plans and projects. So they started with a reign of lawlessness by suppressing all legitimate civic rights and privileges. The press was gagged. The publication of the news and views regarding the doings of the Government and the people after the arrest of Gandhiji and Congressmen was so much restricted that most of the nationalist papers suspended their publications. Thus the liberty of the press was killed. The platform was snatched away by prohibiting the holding of public meeting. The processions were forbidden. The Defence of India rules under Defence of India Act were framed to simply bring the people under their clutches for

each and everything. The police was empowered to apply them as they pleased. The Congress was declared unlawful. All its offices were taken over forcible possession by the police. All its property was forfeited. Even those institutions which were indirectly supposed to be connected with the Congress were captured such as Khadi Bhandars and Ashrams which were merely commercial, or industrial or educational concerns. Non-violence was put to so serious a test that its pursuance itself became a violence. The Government with all their previous experiences of Gandhiji's movements became more daring for perpetrating barbarities. They planned very dextrously to kidnap leaders and workers before actually they could rise from their beds on the morning of the 9th Aug., 1942. The first sight to the Congressman was the police at the early hours of the 9th August morning. After the arrests, the police with the help of the military and arms started the work of simply crushing the people as in a frenzy. The sanctity of human life was no more. There was a wanton dance of police goondaism and excesses. But all that the police and military did was uniform, organised and under the direct control of the entire British Bureaucratic machinery in India.

The people were all unorganised, undisciplined and without any leadership. They were actually a mass of crowd and gathered together in a very natural and innocent manner everywhere in the cities and towns as they heard of the general arrest of their beloved leaders. Their mentality was truely fitting to their character and nature that is of an unorganised crowd which is excessively emotional, impulsive, fickle, inconsistent, irresolute, extreme in action, displaying only the coarser emotions and the less refined sentiments, careless in deliberation, hasty in judgment, incapable of any but the crudest reasoning; easily swayed and led and lacking in self-consciousness and confidence. Such crowds gathered everywhere still they exhibited extraordinary sense of discipline and non-violence. It was all due to Gandhiji and the cause he represented, till men, as they were, could be excited to resist and resist till death. What actually the people did can be very correctly compared with the pricking of nails or teeth by a pigmy faced with imminent end of his life in the cruel grip of a giant. But the Government got the desired chance of firing, and fired indiscriminately on the people in the cities and villages, without any regard for age or sex. When the people retorted by persuing their peaceful demonstrations they were faced with still greater severity and strength. Thus well-planned and very well organised violence of the Government was practised on the unarmed and non-violent people of

India on such a wide scale that hardly an example parallel to it can be traced out from the entire history of the humanity. We shall deal with all this at much greater length in the next few chapters. Here we conclude only with this that the Government of India which started their policy of repression with the declaration that their action shall be "preventive" of dangers rather than "punitive" ended actually with the general orders sent secretly under double covers to the District Magistrates that let the responsible officials specially of the police and the executive be informed that they should clearly and strongly give out to their assistants and staff that anybody bringing a dead body of an Indian supposed to be interested in any way in the Congress, will be rewarded (perhaps *Rs. eighty* per head). Thus it gave rise to indiscriminate shooting of the innocent persons and reduced an Indian to a position of actually a stray mad dog. Give a bad name to a dog and shoot it, was made the order of the day. So put a blame on an Indian and kill him has been the policy of the British Government in India and its worst manifestation was done during the days of August and September 1942. The Government exhibited itself in its most barbarous, wildest and crudest form. The atrocities committed by the Government were not stray or a few but general, regular and innumerable. This gives the positive proof of the pre-planned and organised scheme of the Government to suppress the Congress and the Indian people by pouncing upon them with all the might and resources at the command of the Government. To say the least the Government violence and atrocities on the Indian people, were a sort of a well-organised hunt of a sleeping, feeble and old lion in his den by surrounding him from all directions and pouncing upon him as the kites and the vultures fall upon a piece of flesh or a corpse. Thus the August movement of 1942 was *a game of hunting* played by the British Government in India by pouncing upon the unarmed and defenceless Indians.

The story of this "game of hunting" is so ghastly and tragic that the readers will have to clench their hearts with both the hands and all the might still their stirred and pierced hearts at the plight of *"the poor Indians"* will not be controlled and will burst out in rivers of tears, not of mere water but actually of blood, if they are not gone absolutely cold.

CHAPTER II

BOMBAY ARRESTS AND AFTER

August 9th, 1942, saw the sun-rise with a surprise and astonishment and the whole atmosphere was surcharged

with "feelings," "sentiments" and "high emotions." It was really, in the words of Wordsworth, such a time that :—

"To be alive was a bliss
and to be young was very heaven".

It was not the sound of the trumpets of triumph but it was a call to the nation "to do or die". On previous night, 8th August, 1942, the people of India learnt that the A. I. C. C. at Bombay passed a Resolution of Gandhiji and the Congress Working Committee with a overwhelming majority only 13 voting against it out of the total number of about 270 members present in the session. It was 10 in the night when the A. I. C. C. session concluded with the following words of the Congress President, Maulana Azad, ringing into the ears and hearts of the Indians : "It was for Indians to take a determined step forward, no matter what happened to them, whether they sank or swam, whether they won or lost".

Rulers of yesterday were the prisoners today. All those Congressmen who were controlling the administration of seven big provinces of India were made state-prisoners and clapped in various British Jails in India. From the early hours of the morning of the 9th August, Congressmen were being hunted out from their bedroom to be lodged in jails. The police was hotly persuing the Congressmen throughout India to arrest them wherever they were found and putting them safely in the jails. This work commenced from such early hours of the 9th Aug. morning when even thieves and nocturnal wanderers take to their shelters and retire for rest. But the Indian Police under the British Government of India, which came in the dark cover of treachery, deception and trade, could be expected to do nothing better. The preparations for staging the tragic drama, in which innocent, non-violent and peaceful Indians were once again to be given a blood-bath, were made very elaborately and from a very long time. Hence they were perfect and consummate. The Government of India was impatiently awaiting for the opportunity. The humble-pie which they had to swallow everytime when they came in clash with the saint-statesman of India "Gandhi" was a pricking thorn in the heart of the Government which they wanted to avenge because they thought thus they would succeed in bringing out the ever-aching thorn from their heart but actually what their action has done, only history will tell.

The Government of India acted first. It may be stated that the measures contemplated by the authorities were in a nature of a "blitz" not only to prevent the Congress movement getting a start and gathering momentum but to suppress and strangle the Congress and the people of India

to such an extent that they may be rendered incapable of even raising a voice or finger against the autocratic, atrocious and barbarous deeds of the Government of India. The Government took the decision long before the A. I. C. C. passed the resolution at Bombay and kept it a well-guarded secret so far as India was concerned. One of the strongest supporters of the Government policy admitted it and explained the Government action as below :—

"Action has been taken *precipitately* because reports from certain Provincial Governments had stated that the rank and file of the Congress were planning extensively to sabotage the war efforts."

With the arrest of Gandhiji and the other members of the Congress Working Committee the general round up of all important Congress Workers, Office-bearers of the Congress Committees and the Congress members of the legislatures was started everywhere throughout the country. It is an admitted fact that this action of the Government was of an all-embracing character and was taken precipitately. The total number of arrests even by the evening of the 9th August, '42, reached to thousands in the country to which the Government of India refer not exceeding "few hundreds." This is the *measure* of the Government of India giving facts and figures. We should carefully take note of it. Ten times decrease or increase in the figures, to favour and suit the interest of the Government, can be manipulated by them without slightest hitch and it would be regarded as gospel truth. Here do they not compete or even excel Goebbles, the propaganda minister of the Nazi Germany under Hitler, who is declared to be "the Master of lies" and who claims that repetition and repetition and still again repetition of a lie turns it into "truth" unchallengeable and unrefutable. This general arrest business was done everywhere with such a haste and promptness that almost all the important Congressmen were arrested by the evening of the 9th August.

The news of Gandhiji's and other leaders' arrest spread like wild fire throughout the country. Since the arrests were also being effected everywhere else so naturally there was extraordinary stir everywhere in the country. The people on their own accord, gathered together at important places and the talk on every tongue was of the great conflagration. There was, as should have been, extraordinary excitement and enthusiasm in the people. Hartals, processions and public meetings were generally announced everywhere simultaneously with the announcement of the news of the arrest of Gandhiji and other leaders. This was very

natural and common with the people who had a long training of the non-violent movement under Gandhiji and the Congress. Besides when all their popular leaders including Gandhiji were arrested all at once the provocation and excitement to the people was naturally of the extreme degree. Such an occasion never occurred previously in India when all the leaders including Gandhiji were arrested all at once. This was like a bolt from the blue. The people were actually thunderstruck. They came out as helpless and desperate still they were quite within the four-walls of non-violence and they exhibited extraordinary self-control and discipline.

It is admitted even by the Government that; "First reactions to the arrests were *surprisingly mild.* On 9th August there were disturbances in Bombay, Ahmedabad and Poona but the rest of the country remained quiet. On August 10th disturbances occurred also in Delhi and a few towns in the United Provinces; but still no serious repercussions were reported from elsewhere. It was from August 11th that the situation began to deteriorate rapidly. From then onwards, apart from the hartals, protest meetings and similar demonstrations that were to be expected, concerted outbreaks of mob violence, arson, murder and sabotage took place; and in almost all cases these were directed either against communications of all kinds (including railways, posts and telegraphs) or against the Police. Moreover, these outbreaks started almost simultaneously in widely separated areas in the Provinces of Madras, Bombay and Bihar and also in the Central and United Provinces. The position was at one time extremely serious in the whole of Bihar, except its most southern districts, and in the eastern part of the United Provinces. In these areas, the trouble soon spread from the big towns to the outlying areas. In all the affected Provinces, students were in the forefront of the initial disorders."

The Government was not only prepared to meet all this but was actually responsible for creating them by behaving rashly, unreasonably and brutally at Bombay, Ahmedabad and Poona. They used tear-gas to disperse peaceful processions of the ladies. They resorted to Lathi-charges and even firing on the peaceful crowds of the people, who were trying to hold meetings only to disperse them. The people were excited and enthused by the whole-sale arrests and thereafter they were forcibly suppressed not to give vent to their feelings publicly even in the most non-violent manner then naturally the patience of the people was taxed to the extreme and their store of tolerance like dumb-sufferers was exhausted. At

such a point too they resorted to no act of violence, hooliganism and destruction. But when they were fired at freely by the police and military then in sheer excitement, here and there, they uprooted some telegraph poles or cut telegraph wires or burnt some letter-boxes or removed somewhere Railway Lines or set fire to some goods-sheds or some Railway Stations or some other Government buildings. But all this shows that there was absolutely no systematic work, no organisation and no preplanned-schemes. It is already admitted by the Government itself that "the students invariably were in the forefront". This also furnishes a cause of less activity on 9th August, as it was a Sunday and the students could not meet together. From Monday onward when they met they did participate in the demonstrations in their own way. The students were never organised nor they were any stable force with any Congress movement. They, young as they are, are easily susceptible to excitement and even rash actions, so in such extraordinarily tense atmosphere how could they afford to sit at the fence! They naturally participated and began with peaceful processions but when they were not allowed even to take out such peaceful processions and their perfectly non-violent resistance even was retorted with violence, wanton and inhuman, their blood too felt some warmth on such moments. Still they did no acts of violence. They did not resort to murderous assaults. They simply attempted here and there, to do such things as enumerated above. But all what they did was nothing uncommon and new.

It did not show any preparation on their part nor any organisation from their side. All what they did was at the spur of the moment for which sufficient and repeated provocation was afforded to them by the Government Officials, police and military, who recklessly and wantonly resorted to firing, lathi-charges and use of tear-gas. The victims of lathi-charges and firings were innocent persons without any regard for their age and sex. Still how gracefully and bravely people faced them is and will remain for ever a glorious example of suffering, sacrifice and heroism in the history of the world. Students faced bullets bravely at their chests and were shot dead mercilessly by the police and military while leading peaceful processions. People were charged with lathis and fired upon with bullets freely and repeatedly but even the death could not deter them from their non-violent resistance. But all these heroic deeds were performed spontaneously and bravely by the people in general and not the Congress-workers and well-known Congressmen specially because most of them were arrested on the 9th or soon after

and the rest were avoiding arrest hence hiding themselves. Thus the actual movement in its first phase, just on and after the Bombay arrests, was directly carried on by the people themselves at the spur of the moment on the natural excitement over the whole-sale arrests of their beloved leaders and subsequent further provocation was given by the Government by resorting freely and indiscriminately to firings and lathi-charges and abdicating the rule of law to the rule of lawlessness. Ordinance-rule was the rule of the police, military, civic-guards and virtually of the extreme type of goondaism and violence... Arrests, suppression of all civil liberties, that is, declaring Congress and allied organisations illegal, forfeiture of their offices and property, prohibition of public meetings, processions, stopping of news-papers and publication of news and views regarding the doings of the Government and the popular movement and curfew orders in almost all the cities and big towns, firings, lathi-charges, beating and terrorising was the first phase of the police and the Government measures to meet with the people's enthusiasm and their acts in the atmosphere of tense excitement and provocation. The second phase of the Government repression to meet with the activities of the rural areas began with the collective fines, their realisation and then whole-sale terrorising of the villagers with setting fire to their hearths and homes and even humiliating their women which went in extreme cases to most brutal type of rapes and beatings. Virtually it became a reign of general loot, arson, merciless murders and tortures of the people by the police, military and their hirelings—ruffians and goondas. These excesses and atrocities were vying with, rather outdoing, the atrocities of 1857 by General Neill, Campbell, Havelock and Montgomery, and of 1919 of General Dyer and others, which we have referred to in the previous chapters. All this was being done in the villages and retired places away from the cities.

In the jails, detention places, and police custody, there was going on serious type of torturing, beating and whipping. All this was being done progressively. From the Bombay arrests which reached in its latest phase to the worst type of barbarous treatment when man was reduced to a chattel to be treated mercilessly by a tyrant. Thus in short it can be said that the Government started their repressive policy from the arrest of the leaders at Bombay and continued it on a progressive scale till their tyranny reached to its climax when nobody could raise its finger or utter a word in protest of the Government acts of tyranny, and barbarity which were being perpetrated in the cloak of suppressing an open rebellion.

Really speaking all what was done from the Bombay arrests and after, was nothing short of persuing the policy of "iron and blood". It was the British edition of the atrocities of the Nazi-Germany to exterminate the Indian National Congress and Indian Nationalism. All this was done in the name of defence of India and to foil the alleged attempts at sabotage of the war efforts of the Government of India. But to the British Government, through its best representative, Mr. L. S. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, a warning, how true and real, is given by Mr. M. Thein Pe, a young Burmese revolutionary leader as below :—

"Mr. Amery must know that dissatisfaction of a people who have lost their freedom for long and who cannot feel the ecstasy of freedom in the present, is real and not imaginary. Mr. Amery and his kind are thinking that the noises of discontent are only the creation of the disgruntled leaders and masses are erratic and can be easily moulded into any shape by catch-words and slogans, uttered by some tip-top leaders. In short, Amery and Co., refuse to recognise the role of the mass, the invulnerable role of the people. They are even now wavering about a people's war. They still do have faith in the Fascist methods of conducting a total war. But they are too late to profitably adopt those methods. Herein, lies their failure. They have yet to realise that a real people's war on all fronts is the only effective challenge to Fascist total war.

"Suppression of the people may lead to internal peace but that peace is the peace of the grave and people have a ghostly and ghastly way of voicing their discontent."

CHAPTER III

THE MOVEMENT

THE REACTION ON THE PEOPLE AND THEIR ACTIVITIES

The first to attack and take the offensive was the Government of India. Their attack was of a nature of "Blitz". They started with the wholesale arrests of all Congress leaders and important Congressmen throughout the country. All the members of the Congress Working Committee including Gandhiji, who were present at Bombay, were arrested between 5 and 6 a. m. on 9th August, '42. Simultaneously from the early hours of the morning of the 9th August, '42, the work of arresting the Congressmen was carried out briskly, uniformly and in organised manner throughout the country. At a very low estimate about 5,000 Congressmen were arrested for indefinite detention under Defence of India Rules on the 9th

of August, 1942, and thereafter the work of arrests continued from day to day on an increasing scale till the number of arrests reached over a lakh by the end of September '42. All Congress and allied organisations were declared unlawful. Their offices and property were forfeited and forcibly taken possession of. All public meetings and processions were prohibited. Strongest restrictions were placed on the publication of news and views in the newspapers. Over 90 nationalist newspapers ceased publications and others were publishing news and views only authorised by the Government. Mr. S. A. Brelvi; in his speech as the Chairman of the 3rd Session of All India Newspapers Editors' Conference at Madras, summarised this as below :—

"The Press in India was confronted with a great crisis when the Government sought to control, muzzle and humiliate it in a manner familiarized to us by the Nazis and the Fascists.

"A number of newspapers has been suppressed or had suspended publication as a result of the new restrictions or the manner in which they were applied. The most harmful use made of these restrictions was to deny publicity to statements and reports supporting the Indian demand for freedom and legitimate political activity.

"Government suppressed all news regarding Prof. Bhansali's fast and imposed draconian restrictions on the publication of news and comments about Gandhiji's fast. Bhansali was neither a detenu nor a prisoner. As a free citizen he was entitled to undertake a fast.

"The most obnoxious feature of the executive highhandedness was that the pains and penalties of the Defence of India Rules were requisitioned to prevent the Press even from informing the public that it had been gagged."

Curfew Orders were promulgated in the cities and were observed very cruelly. All attempts of the people, however, peaceful and non-violent, to take out processions and hold public meetings were strongly and brutally foiled by the police and the military. The use of tear-gas, lathi-charges and firings, was resorted to freely and indiscriminately. The very first day on 9th August firing was done at Bombay, Ahmedabad and Poona. Thereafter the business of firing became the order of the day. Most of the big cities, towns, and even villages had a taste of firing done indiscriminately and wantonly. All these suffocating restrictions and depriving of the people of all their legitimate and peaceful civic rights besides exciting and provocating treatment of the individual Government Officials, particularly of police and the military, could not be tolerated by the people lying down. All this acted and

reacted on the people very strongly. Their first action was the direct outcome of the general and whole-sale arrests which was nothing else but observance of peaceful Hartals and attempt to take out peaceful processions and to hold mass public meetings. But they were not allowed even to do this and were violently and forcibly compelled to desist from taking out processions and holding meetings. In the attempts of dispersing the non-violent and peaceful crowds of the innocent people, who came out to express their feelings on the arrests of their leaders, the police and military used their utmost force of violence by resorting to the use of tear-gas, free-lathi-charges and firing. At this the people felt compelled and provoked to persist in their attempts with greater resistance. Acts of violence on the part of the people were the result of the provocation and excitement caused to them by the Government. The subsequent incidents shaping like the general movement in the country were the "natural and spontaneous outbursts" of the people on the doings of the Government. This contention is proved by the facts which are even accepted rather published by the Government itself. The inference drawn by the Government from the facts and happenings that this contention is "countered" is absolutely wrong and does not stand to reason and facts.

While the Government took the offensive as against the contemplated movement by the Congress and Gandhiji following the dictum and policy that "the most effective defence is to take the offensive first." The people were left without leaders and any definite programme and instructions hence they did what struck them feasible and possible at the spur of the moment. They were excited and provoked and thus were driven to such acts which they would have never even contemplated to do in the ordinary circumstances. The students were undoubtedly most excited and most active. The clash started from the cities and then it proceeded to the towns and villages. The conditions and circumstances, as were created by the sudden offensive of the Government, were being similar, the reaction was also similar throughout the country. The people's objects of attack were the police stations, Rly. stations and other Government Offices besides cutting of Telegraph Wires, burning of letter-boxes and tempering with the permanent Roads and ways and Railway tracks. But all this was done in a sort of excitement on a country-wide scale, of course in some parts it was done more widely and intensely than in the others. But all this was done in a most disorganised and crude form. It lacked training and even expert advice or help. The damage done to the Government property

under above heads was almost nominal as compared to size and extent of the Country and the excitement in the people. This shows and clearly proves that there were absolutely no preparations, no pre-planning and no pre-arrangements. All what was done was at the spur of the moment and by the mobs either consisting of the villagers or the students. No doubt as the people as a whole were tired of the British rule and its policy in India so they desired to paralyse the administration but certainly they had absolutely no preparation for it and had no equipment, implements, instruments and armament. They ran a different race in a hap-hazard manner as they were provoked to do so by the Government and its revolt-exciting and blood-boiling policy. It was all done in a blind manner with a sheer force of number, excitement and sentiment but certainly not under any well-guided leadership, plan, or policy. It was no movement, no strategy, no warfare and no organised action of any sort, violent or non-violent. It was merely the resultant of a "Spontaneous outburst" of the suppressed people on a highly exciting provocation and shock given by the Government through their policy and conduct. The responsibility for all this primarily, directly and largely rests on the Government of India.

We quote below the facts and figures supplied by the Government themselves about their alleged losses by the people in the whole of India and throughout the uprising or so called disturbances :—

Losses of the Government

A—PROPERTY

I—Railways

1.	Rolling Stock	Rs. 18 lakhs.
2.	Track	9 ,,
3.	Station buildings	8½ ,,
4.	Ancilliary Equipment	6½ ,,
		Rs. 42 lakhs.

The maximum destruction was done to the E.I.R. and B. & N.W.R., the replacement and reconstruction of the former will cost over Rs. 12 lakhs and of the latter over Rs. 14 lakhs. By the end of December 1942, 318 Stations were attacked, many were burnt and others were wholly or partially destroyed. There were 59 derailments, involving many passenger trains, out of all, 3 were bad cases in which 27 persons were killed and 112 injured. Of course all of them were Indians. Besides there were late trains

or no trains at all uptill November when normal traffic was resumed.

II—Post Offices

895 post offices raided, 57 completely destroyed and 252 seriously damaged.

(a) Loss of Cash etc. about	Rs. 2 lakhs.
(b) Loss of furniture etc.	1 ,,
	Rs. 3 lakhs.

III—Treasury

Treasury looted at Ram Tell (C.P.) Rs. 3½ lakhs.

Thus we take in round figures. The actual losses of the Government in their own words were of about Rs. 50/- lakhs maximum.

LIFE

I. 53 Government servants were killed.

II. As regards injuries sustained by the Government servants, no definite figure is mentioned by the Government.

Besides the above figures following are the salient facts as reported by the Government about the activities of the people during this uprising, revolt or disturbance, call it as you please :—

I—GENERAL

"A crowd varying from 500 to 10,000 marched upon a police station or a post office or a railway station attacking officials, destroying records and in many cases setting buildings on fire. In quelling riots hundreds of policemen, suffered injuries from brick-bats and bottles.

IN BIHAR

"A passenger train was stopped at Fatvah by a crowd in which two Air force officers happened to be travelling. The crowd promised to spare their life if they surrendered their arms. The officers agreed only to be brutally hacked to death. Their bodies were paraded through the town and later thrown into a river."

"In Monghyr district, villagers surrounded a plane which had crashed in a river, offered to row the survivors to the bank if they surrendered their arms. The victims trusted the crowd, who having reduced them to defencelessness, pounced upon them; two survivors who jumped into the river were beaten to death with lathis.

Attempts in Bihar cost Police Officers their lives at Katra,

Minapur, Singhai, Rupali and Sarath, and similarly the lives of the Sub-Divisional Officer, Sitamari, and his party.

On August 16, an armed mob of 4,000—about a thousand of whom marched in regular formation—attacked the Minapore police station, seriously wounding a Sub-Inspector and injuring several constables on duty. The Sub-Inspector was beaten and disarmed, tied to a pole and thrown into a fire which was already consuming the station. The tortured officer crawled out of the fire, but was beaten with lathis, thrown back into the flames and pinned in the fire with poles and lathis."

"A Similar horrible outrage took place at Rupali police station. A mob of 10,000 to 12,000 attacked a station and stoned the police staff, including a junior Sub-Inspector and the constables on duty. Kerosene oil was poured on the police station and the policemen were consigned to the flames."

"An armed mob looted the Silk Institute."

"In district Monghyr, five persons accused of theft were produced before a panchayat court which promptly delivered judgment. The fingers of their right hands were cut off, three men lost an eye each and some were branded with hot irons. In Gaya district, two burglars tried by a self-constituted court were condemned to death and killed on the spot."

"A pujari of a temple in Bihpur in Bhagalpur district, suspected of being a police spy, was done to death on November 30."

"Six hundred prisoners mutinied in Bhagalpur jail on September 4th. A deputy superintendent, the carding master and a warder lost their lives in this affair and their bodies were burnt. Extensive damage was also done to the jail factory, which was set on fire."

Mr. Jaglal Chaudhury, who had been a Congress Minister from 1937 to 1939, and who was one of Mr. Gandhi's trusted men, personally instigated the burning of a police station in the Saran district and during the attack urged the crowd to tie up the Sub-Inspector in a sack and throw him into the river. This same Minister made plans to resist troops with spears, lighted torches and boiling oil. He has been tried and sentenced to ten years imprisonment, the sentence being reviewed and upheld by a Judge of the Patna High Court."

"There was an attack on the police station of Minapur in Muzzaffarpur district on August 16th by an armed mob of four or five thousand men. They looted and burnt the police-station, assaulted the officers and constables and burnt the Sub-Inspector alive. There is no doubt whatever that these acts were perpetrated in the name of the Congress.

Leading members of the mob were shouting Congress slogans and carrying Congress flags. The main accused, who was responsible for holding the Inspector down in the fire (and who has been sentenced to death) was seen hoisting a Congress flag on the roof of the thana ; this was an exhibit in the case. At the conclusion of the judgment in discussing the interpretation of section 121 of the Indian Penal Code (waging war against the King-Emperor) the Judge observed :

"It is a matter of common knowledge that the object of the recent disturbances and risings throughout the country was to paralyse the administration and to compel the Government to submit to the demands of the Indian National Congress.

ORISSA

"In Balasora district a body of armed police who had gone to make some arrests there found themselves confronted by a mob of four or five thousand persons, who had been mobilised by the sounding of conch-shells from village to village as the police party approached. They disobeyed an order to disperse, and the police had to open fire, ultimately causing 25 or 26 deaths and about 50 injuries."

"A mob of 1,000 killed a forest guard of Jeypore State and injured 15 other servants and a magistrate."

CENTRAL PROVINCES

"On August 16, a mob attacked the police station at Ashti, demanding the surrender of the thana. The police were compelled to open fire in self-defence, but were overpowered when their small stock of ammunition gave out. A Sub-Inspector was stoned to death, and one head constable and three constables were murdered. Half-dead constables were burnt alive with kerosene. Only one head constable and one constable escaped. The same day at Chimur, a mob of thousands stormed the rest-house killing the sub-divisional magistrate and leaving the naib-tehsildar nearly dead. The rest-house and furniture were then set on fire. Later, in an encounter with the police, a Sub-Inspector and a constable were wounded and carried away, and a constable and an Inspector were overpowered and beaten to death. The mob then returned to the rest-house armed with police muskets and bayonets. The naib-tehsildar, who was still alive, was done to death with a bayonet, and his and the sub-divisional magistrate's bodies were thrown into the rest-house and burnt to ashes."

"Hooligans sacked a C. I. D. Inspector's bungalow at Nagpur."

"Fifteen miles from Nagpur on the Bhandara road, a

crowd attacked a police station. Some of the rioters were armed with guns. The police were fired on and a head-constable and a constable were wounded. The crowd took away rifles and ammunition from the station house. When subsequently the police searched the house of the alleged leader, they found an electric-generating set for use with a wireless transmitter."

"On August 11th the son of a prominent Congressman of Wardha who had returned from attending the A. I. C. C. meeting at Bombay read out in a public meeting the Congress programme which included school and railway strikes and the cutting of telegraph and telephone wires; the District Superintendent of Police succeeded in seizing the copy of the programme but the police party was at once mobbed. On the same day a professor in the Commerce College at Wardha, who had resigned his post on the arrest of Mr. Gandhi, harangued a crowd, urging them to boycott the police and threatening traders that their shops would be looted if they sold any articles to the police; the deaths of two men at Wardha by police firing would be avenged, he said, and two men would be considered equivalent to two hundred constables. As a result of these speeches a post office and police station records were burnt and telegraph wires and poles were broken. On August 14th, Pandit R. S. Shukla, the former Congress Premier of the Central Provinces, told the police officer in whose custody he was that if they had been given ten days time instead of being arrested on their way back from Bombay, every police station in the district would have been burnt down. On August 15th the vice-president of the Mandla District Congress Committee asked a crowd of about 1,500 people to destroy Government records, railway lines and bridges. In the same district the previous day four members of the Congress party had instigated villagers to blow up a bridge; when they failed in their attempt they looted some passing Government grain carts instead. Two prominent Congress workers (one being a woman) in Akola addressed lightning meetings of mill hands on August 13th and urged them to sabotage communications, march on banks, railways and post offices and burn them down. As a result of these speeches the mill hands succeeded in destroying some telephone poles and wires before they were dispersed by the police. On August 14th a crowd of two or three thousand set fire to all the public buildings of Ramtek including the tehsil, the civil court, the police station, the post office and the railway station; a train in the station was set on fire and the

treasury looted of about three lakhs of rupees ; many known Congressmen took part in this affair.

UNITED PROVINCES

"In an attack on the police station at Qasimabad a Sub-Inspector and a contable were killed and the police arms seized.

"Houses of some Government officials were looted in Ballia."

"In the waiting hall of the Aligarh railway station a bomb in a suit-case exploded, killing two constables and a coolie. This bomb had a cast-iron casing with scrap iron filings and there was evidence of an electrical firing device."

"21 seed stores were burnt and the land records of some 420 villages were torn up or destroyed."

"In an attack on Saidraja Station on the main East Indian Railway line near the Bihar border the attackers advanced in some sort of formation and when repelled, carried off their dead in bullock-carts brought either for that purpose or for loot."

"A typical instance of mass attacks on Government buildings led by Congressmen occurred at a tehsil in Ballia district (which was one of the main storm centres in the opening phase). At this tehsil, there was a well-constructed office with a strong record-room and good quarters. A mob, led by a local Congressman, who installed himself as "Swaraj Tehsildar" for a short period, broke down the perimeter wall, destroyed every record in the office, broke into the treasury, and looted Rs. 15,000. At the headquarters of this district, a mob led by prominent local Congressmen sacked the residences of four Government officers and two non-official gentlemen who had given some support to Government; one of the latter was a doctor the entire contents of whose dispensary was wantonly destroyed. In the neighbouring district of Azamgarh, the District Magistrate was besieged in an outlying police station by a mob of about five thousand men and a pitched battle lasting two hours took place before the mob was driven off. Before the battle started, the leaders explained that as Swaraj had been attained they wanted to hoist the Congress flag on the police station. In the Pilibhit district an excited crowd directed by three local well-known Congressmen, including a secretary of the District Congress Committee, murdered a constable, for no other reason than that he was a constable. In the Bijnor district a mass attack on the police station was led by a "four-anna" Congressman mounted on horseback. In another part of the same district, the secretary of the local Tehsil Congress Committee organised and led a mass attack on a railway station. In another attack on a railway station

in Barabanki district the local Congress "dictator" and nine other members of the District Congress Committee were prominent among the attackers. In the Muttra district, thirteen men, all of whom were members of the Congress party, were concerned in the derailing of a goods train. In Allahabad city, the president of Ward Congress Committee was involved in an attack on a police outpost, the looting of cash and the cutting of telephone wires on August 12th. In the same district 17 persons, all of them four-anna members of Congress were convicted of looting a post office and burning a dak bungalow."

BENGAL

"In some places, the perpetrators came armed with bows and arrows. During an unsuccessful attack on a police station in Dacca district, a policeman was shot dead by an arrow and about a hundred arrows were shot at a small police party at village Parila during a pitched battle with the rioters. Several police officers paid with their lives while quelling disturbances. At Bhanga a police Sub-Inspector was felled to the ground and bludgeoned to death."

"Officials and persons suspected of loyalty to Government were threatened and molested and in some cases their paddy was looted."

"A bomb was thrown in a canteen at Sealdah station, Calcutta, as a result of which two lady volunteer helpers and a British soldier received injuries.

In some Bengal villages, each household was asked to give a volunteer for making raids on Government property, the penalty for refusal being the destruction of the house.

In some parts of Bengal, citizens suspected of loyalty to Government were kidnapped, beaten, kept in detention and sometimes held to ransom. Peaceful citizens were blackmailed in the guise of "fines". During one raid seven citizens, including a collectorate clerk, were rescued from one of the so-called "Gandhi jahats". A head-master and his four brothers and several watchmen were kidnapped in Midnapore. A citizen on his way from Kadamtala to Tamluk was waylaid, overpowered, blindfolded and carried away to a dilapidated hut. The kidnappers took him from village to village at night and finally decided to try him in a self-constituted criminal court. Another kidnapped person was kept in detention for a fortnight, blindfolded with rubber pads and brutally beaten. Because he was suspected of being a police spy.

In Midnapore in Bengal, the operations of the rebels indicated considerable care and planning; an effective warn-

ing system had been devised, elementary tactical principles were observed, for instance, encirclement and flanking movements, clearly on pre-arranged signals. The forces of disorder were accompanied by doctors and nursing orderlies to attend to casualties and the intelligence system was efficient.

DELHI

A police Sub-Inspector who tried to save the Railway Clearing Accounts Office in Delhi, was killed.

C. Krishnan Nair, an important rural Congress worker of Delhi and a member of the Narela Gandhi Ashram, who went underground at the time of the August arrests, has been sentenced to two years imprisonment for setting fire to a railway station on November 12th.

MADRAS

A mob entered a salt factory in Trinnevelly District, overpowered a petty officer and four officers on duty and set fire to the weighing shed. The Assistant Inspector, who was living nearby, hurried to the spot and was brutally killed.

Hooligans sacked the officer's quarters attached to the Agricultural Institute at Sabur, a Revenue Inspector's bungalow and a village Munsif's house in the Madras Presidency. Four strangers, boarding a mail bus in Bellary, threw chilly powder into the eyes of the driver who had to stop the bus. Immediately 20 persons, with their faces covered and armed with daggers and sticks, entered the bus and took away the mail bags.

A country-made bomb was thrown at an audience in a drama in aid of the Red Cross Society in Kistna. Five persons were injured by the explosion, but the District Magistrate, for whom the bomb was obviously intended, escaped. Nor were troops spared. A bomb exploded in a cafe frequented by British service men, injuring ten persons including a Naval rating who subsequently succumbed to his injuries. Another burst in the compound of a cinema just as the troops were leaving after the show. Eighteen British soldiers and two Indians were injured. A boy of 15, working as a vendor in a tea-stall was killed.

Two drivers and a coolie were burned to death when a lory shed adjoining an aerodrome in South India was attacked by a mob and set alight. A watchman and his wife met with a similar fate in a blazing toddy shop in Tuticorin.

In Madras, the campaign of sabotage of communications started with the violent attack on Tenali railway station in Guntur district on August 12th ; the previous day two persons who had just returned from the A. I. C. C. meeting at Bombay

had held a public meeting at Tenali, at which a most provocative description of the events at Bombay had been given.

BOMBAY

In Surat, crops belonging to police patels were burnt or otherwise damaged.

In another outrage in Bombay, three British soldiers were injured, and seven passers-by, one of whom subsequently died. An explosion in a Poona cinema injured seven British soldiers, three fatally."

The above are almost the exhaustive charges of the Government against the Congress to throw responsibility on it of all what the people and the Government perpetrated on the Indian soil.

We also give below some other facts and figures which the Government have admitted and given out:—

(A) COLLECTIVE FINES

Mr. Amery (Secretary of State for India) in reply to a question in the House of Commons said:—

"My latest information does not extend beyond August 31 last up till when collective fines had been imposed in 1,556 cases. The total amount of fines was approximately Rs. 90 Lakhs of which Rs. 78½ Lakhs were collected."

In the Central Assembly Session on 12th February 1943, the Home Member, Sir Reginald Maxwell, replying to Sardar Sant Singh's question said:—

"Firing had been resorted to 538 times upto about the end of the year 1942 in connection with the disturbances following the Congress arrests. The number of persons killed by police or military firing up to about the end of the year was 940 and the number injured 1,630, and 60,229 persons had been arrested up to about the end of the year. The number of persons convicted up to about the end of the year was approximately 26,000. He had no information about the number of persons prosecuted or the number of sentenced to death or executed. Approximately 18,000 persons had been detained under rules 26 and 129 of the Defence of India Rules up to about the end of the year."

Here, without going much into the details, and even on the basis of the Government facts and figures, we find that where the losses of lives on Government side are 53 lives lost they killed 940 and injured 1,630 of the people and for the monetary loss of about Rs. 50 Lakhs, they imposed Collective Fines alone of Rs. 90 Lakhs out of which Rs. 78½ Lakhs were actually deposited in the Government Treasury. But the reliance should be put in these figures only to

that extent as in the Government figures in such matters. Still even from these facts and figures an intelligent reader can very well judge and estimate to a large extent the actual facts and figures. According to our estimate, no less than 2,500 persons, from the people's side, either in the course of encounters or wanton stray shooting at unwary and harmless individuals, were killed.

There is no denying of the fact that the people were provoked to launch a sort of campaign against the British administration in India which had been a torturing bondage to the people from which they desired and strove hard to be free. Left to themselves, without any proper and regular lead and leader, they adopted to the method suggested to them in an irresponsible and stray manner but in all their activities, the main motive force was the Government repression, to move for freedom from the British rule in India. What the people did we have put barely in the words of the Government. But what the Government did to excite the people to do all what they did and thereafter, is still to be narrated which we shall do in the following chapters.

Here we conclude with a quotation from the letter of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerji, a former minister of Bengal, which he wrote to the Viceroy on August 12, 1942. It runs as below :—

"Repression is not the remedy at this critical hour. Indeed the history of all countries struggling for freedom amply discloses that the greater the repression from the ruling power, the more intense is the spirit of resistance of the people who regard themselves as oppressed and downtrodden. You may keep down by a severely repressive policy the external manifestations of discontent,—even that may become difficult to achieve without using extraordinary force, which again will have the most disastrous effects on the public mind of India. But even if you succeed, discontent is bound to be driven underground and anti-Government, especially anti-British feelings will stiffen throughout India. The enemy's object will be attained, for he cares not about Indian freedom but merely wants a chaotic condition in India, of which he will not fail to take the fullest advantage at the right hour. Indeed a blind pursuit of a repressive policy and a failure to satisfy India's legitimate aspirations may well create an atmosphere in India which will make us look upon the enemy as a virtual liberator from the hands of the British oppressors, a state of feeling with which many Indians hailed your ancestors under different surroundings in this very country about 200 years ago, when they gradually changed from their role of traders to that of masters of Indian affairs.

I therefore appeal to you to take a realistic view of the Indian situation, which must be examined in the light of rapidly-changing word-movements. There is none who is satisfied with the present system of Indian administration, and an immediate transfer of power is essential for the solution of the Indian deadlock. The substance of the Congress demand is nothing more than this. If there is a hidden motive to the contrary in the minds of the Congress leaders, which I for one am not prepared to believe, that motive will come out in its true colour as soon as your constructive proposals for the transfer of power are made known to the public of India.

What is regarded as the ***most unfortunate decision on the part of the British Government was its refusal to negotiate with Mahatma Gandhi***, even after he gave his emphatic assurance that the movement would not start until all avenues for an honourable settlement had been explored. ***Indeed the movement has not been started by the Congress but it is the British policy which has accelerated the crisis.*** This is an important aspect of the present situation which one cannot but deplore.

I would request you to apply your mind immediately to the problem of the solution of the present deadlock which is equally disastrous to India and Britain."

CHAPTER IV

THE START AND THE NATURE OF THE MOVEMENT

The start of the movement was actually forced by the Government by the arrest of Gandhiji and other leaders. The people of all classes and the masses in general were excited to act. But the people could not launch their movement according to any plan or programme. It was a thing forced upon them by the circumstances created by the sudden, swift and serious attack of the Government.

The Congress organisation as such was paralysed. Almost all really influential and active Congressmen were arrested and clapped in the jails. Besides the people were deprived of all civil liberties *i. e.* of association, press and platform. Thus all legitimate and legal ways of protest were blocked and what the people desired or attempted to do became illegal hence was suppressed by all the force at the command of the Government. The use of force was absolutely unchecked and uncontrolled. In a way, the forces of lawlessness, autocracy and individual official atrocities both organised and unorganised, were let loose. The people were made easy victims of

the lawless administration or Goonda-Raj. If there was any law it was the law of the Jungle.

So even this serious conflagration, set up so suddenly and strongly by the Government, could not terrify or bow down the people. They started their resistance very gallantly. Every member of the society did its best to save the national honour and to uproot the foreign tyrannical administration of the country. The general discontentment and disaffection against the Government became acute and active. Everybody was prepared to risk his all to liberate the country from the foreign rule. The upper-classes, big industrialists, business-men, bankers and traders, were to finance the movement liberally. The middle-class businessmen shop-keepers were still more advanced. They suspended their work and observed Hartal for days together even at the cost of their being brutally penalisad by the Government. In the cities after these two sections, the most active and daring was the Student Class in general. Everywhere Students in the country exhibited extraordinary enthusiasm and activities. They went on strike—wholesale – took out large processions and held big meetings defying all Government orders and authorities. Neither the Lathi-Charges ncr the Bullet-shots could deter them from persuing their course. They became rather rash and more revolutionary when they were ill-treated, beaten and even shot at, then, of course, the acts of destruction of post offices, police stations, railway stations, Government Offices, cutting of telegraph-wires and even removing of railway lines were done. They were joined by other people too. But all these activities lasted on a mass scale only for a few days in the cities specially so far as the educational institutions were not closed, which were closed thereafter for the month of August, September, October almost everywhere. When the students were thus relieved from their attendance in the colleges, they turned towards the villages. In the villages the peasantry was more anxious to be relieved from the present rule than the city-labourer. Hence they welcomed the attempts of ending the British rule in India. But they had no means and no organisation. They also liked the first wave in the cities of expressing protest against the British policy and rule and attempted to do the same. They also attacked, according to the circumstances, the police-stations, post offices and railway stations. But these activities were sporadic and disorganised and were the direct outcome of the shocking blow of general repression hurled upon the country by the Government.

There was undoubtedly a wave of public resentment, active and energetic, expressing very explicitly and boldly

that the British rule in India was no more wanted and the people were anxious to be free from this curse of the foreign rule. The immediate cause of the movement was the policy of the general and wholesale repression which was ill-conceived and uncalled for. Among other causes was the general discontentment of the people which suddenly burst out as a reaction of the severe repression. As was the nature of the general repression so was the nature of the movement. In this aspect the movement was very scientific and natural reaction. Every action was a reaction and the intensity of the second is in equal proportion to the first because the second derives its force from and depends on the first. The force which was exhibited by the Government in their policy of repression produced in result, its reaction of no less strength. Besides intensity, the extensiveness was also in the same proportion. As the repression was India-wide and general so was the movement. The force of the repression, for instance, was not so much in the Frontier Province as in U. P., C. P., Bihar, Bombay, Madras or Bengal because comparatively repression, there, was not so serious as in other provinces. Besides, so far the nature of the repression was general, indiscriminate and wholesale, the movement was also a mass-movement. When the repression was more brisk and severe in the cities, the movement was also very intense in the cities. The repression, really speaking, lit the fire of the movement and added fuel to it more and more by its additional dozes. When the repressive-machinery of the Government moved towards the villages then movement also shifted its operations from the cities to the rural areas. When the Government resorted to the policy of revenge and individual persecution rather then general repression, then the movement went under-ground and forced the workers to adopt to the policy of individual terrorism. The stray instances of Bomb out-rages and other such activities were the direct result of the Government acts of individual persecution which turned some persons to these desperate actions. But the increasing repression and use of greater and greater force by the Government completely crushed the people and even terrorised them to sullen silence but all this could only create the silence of the grave and not the peace of life.

The people were hunted like beasts and were treated like brutes. Still worse was that the innocent people themselves were blamed and penalised for all this and the guilty police and military-men escaped scot-free with admiration and rewards. This should have been when the rule in India

has been of the same who are actually responsible for all the troubles since August '42 and after. They are, to begin with, number one Mr. Churchill himself, number two his right hand, Mr. Amery, and then number three and four Linlithgow and Maxwell—couple who control the actual administration of the country. In 1943 February-Session of the Central Assembly, when discussion on Mr. K. C. Neogy's resolution, moved in the session of September '42, urging an enquiry by a committee of members of the house, into allegations of "excesses" committed by the police and the military in dealing with the August disturbances in the country, was resumed, the Home Member, Sir Reginald Maxwell, replying the debate, could have cheeks to say :—

"The Government would oppose all attempts to place their employees in the dock. Public servants must be supported in all their legitimate actions. The House would agree that all outrage must be suppressed by all means available. Law and order would become impossible if Government servants had to face an enquiry as proposed by the resolution. Without a firm and loyal police and public services, the writ of the House, and similar institutions could not run.

"The Government had not been idle since the resolution was first debated last session. They had sent round to the provincial Governments, copies of the debate for such action as they thought fit to take. No enquiry is possible into vague and indefinite allegations and most of the allegations made during the debate are vague, indefinite, or represent only one side of the story.

"For instance, Mr. Jamnadas's story of Nanderbagh omitted the fact that the police had to deal with a mob of 1,000 strong, which was pelting stones and brick-bats on the former. The police fired 19 rounds. Fourteen people were injured and five killed but only amongst those killed, and three amongst the injured, were under 16 years of age. The House must remember that Mr. Jamnadas Mehta was not present on the spot and his statement was based on hearsay evidence.

Mr. Neogy : Was the hon. getleman present on the spot ?

Sir Reginald : No.

Mr. Neogy : Then his statement are equally based on hearsay statements.

"Government entirely deny that there is any policy of frightfulness as alleged by Mr. Jamna Das Mehta. No excesses were committed and no excessive force was used in putting down the disturbances of last August. If excesses had taken place they represented only isolated cases and not the general policy of the Government. The Governments concerned, however, had taken action against persons in

those cases. For instance, cases against policemen were pending in C. P., U. P., and Delhi. As these excesses were not a part of the general policy of the Government, there was no case made for an all-India enquiry.

"The House must remember that it was the mob which was violent to begin with and the police had the arduous task of restoring order and protecting Government property. Till the middle of November last, 49 fatal and 1,363 non-fatal cases amongst the police force were reported from mob violence. Mob violence was responsible for destroying or badly damaging 192 police stations and posts, 494 Government buildings, 318 railway stations and 309 post and telegraph offices.

"There were 103 cases of serious damage to railway track and 11285 cases of serious damage or destruction of telegraph and telephone lines and installations. There were three cases in which military property and installations were destroyed or damaged. There were 14 fatal cases and 70 non-fatal cases amongst the military from mob violence. These figures would indicate the seriousness of the rebellion the Government had to face in this country.

"As for women and children, it was not denied that in dealing with mob violence of the character referred to above, in some cases, innocent persons had suffered. But it was not wilful action against them. The House must also take into consideration how innocent persons were made to suffer by mob violence and bomb out-rages in various parts of India. The Government, is however, opposed to any enquiry and, therefore, would oppose the resolution and the various amendments."

The above statement of the Home Member gives out the Government side of the movement and supports the contention that the movement was suppressed with such brutality as involved serious sufferings of the innocent persons including women and children. The cases of the punishment awarded to the police for their brutalities in C. P., U. P., and Delhi, were not the proof of the adequate punishment inflicted on the police but were only the instances of the horrible police atrocities which support the contention that the excesses of the police and the military required thorough inquiry to meet the ends of justice. But alas ! demand of justice from those whose very existence is based on negation of justice ! This is as impossible as an expectation and demand as can be conceived of ! Hence it was never met and the British Government in India still stands with pride though condemned in the eyes of "justice", "humanity", "fairplay", and "freedom."

The movement was a sincere and strong expressing of

the people's yearning for liberty and was a revolt against tyranny, injustice, inhumanity and slavery. It was crushed and defeated because it was never started under any plan, scheme, programme, organisation and leadership. It was a spontaneous outburst of the people's feelings rudely shocked by the whole-sale arrests of their leaders and subsequent repression of their ordinary, legitimate and peaceful civic rights and civil-liberties. It persisted and prolonged so long and passed through so many phases only because the mighty and tyrannical Government knowingly or unknowingly behaved through their policy and actions in such a way that the movement could take no other course but the one it took.

We have dealt in this chapter how the movement started and what were its nature and course. Now in the next part we shall deal in detail with the Government policy, their activities and atrocities in as much detail as possibly we can collect correctly and reliably.

Here we remember the memorable words of Gandhiji which he expressed in his written statement before the court during his trial at Ahmedabad in March, 1922 :

"A subtle but effective system of terrorism and an organised display of force on the one hand and the deprivation of all powers of retaliation or self-defence on the other, have emasculated the people."

True, the people of India are so emasculated that they can do nothing effectively, non-violently or violently or in any other way. Theirs has become a plight so sad and so bad that to change it: they are required not only to suffer and suffer patiently or to resist and resist strongly but to be prepared to end themselves bit by bit.

Mrs. Sarojini Devi, on the eve of the Independence Day (26th January, 1944), in a memorable message to "Followers of Congress" said :—

"They must speak with one voice, act with one will which leaves no scope for variations of personal interpretations of the essential principles for which the Congress stands : Non-violence, national unity, unceasing resistance to all forms of aggression and exploitation, which despoil our people and devastate our land.

"For us, there can only be, the open path of honourable peace or the steep and *perilous path of sacrifice* which ensures freedom.

"Let us then, with invincible faith and invulnerable courage, address ourselves to the fulfilment of our glorious task and in the history of our times, be accounted among the 'boldest' of hearts that ever faced the Sun and sang a kindred song out to its face."

PART V

GOVERNMENT ATROCITIES

CHAPTER I

GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR GENERAL REPRESSION.

Gandhiji's last speech in the A. I. C. C., on 8th August, 1942, which concluded at about 10 p. m., could not be broadcast or telegraphed and the newspapermen were in their offices to do their days work that the resolution of the Government of India, passed by the Governor-General-in-Council on the A. I. C. C. decision, was being telegraphed from Delhi. Thus it is clear that the Government of India could not possibly have received the report of Gandhiji's speech in which he expressed his earnest desire to seek interview with the Viceroy and definitely declared: "We shall make every effort to see the Viceroy before starting the struggle." Gandhiji's speech was throughout and essentially a speech for peace and not for war. He laid all emphasis on non-violence from the beginning to the end. He insisted rather begged for the independence of India in which he implied a desire for the peace of the world but the British ears were turned against him. He, addressing the United Nations and Britain, said: "They have an opportunity now of a life-time to declare India Free and prove their real intentions. If they miss it, they will be missing the opportunity of a life-time, which never comes twice in the same generation and the history will say that they did not discharge their overdue debt to India."

But the British Government in India was sitting at Delhi, prepared to pounce upon the Congress as soon as the "Quit India" resolution was adopted by the A. I. C. C. The Government was not at all willing to consider anything thereafter and was not even prepared to examine and understand the Congress view-point. What Gandhiji said in his speech was not at all heard or considered. Doors for any compromise were banged against the Congress and it was declared unlawful and its leaders out-laws. They were arrested before the 'day break' and their followers beated back by the Lathi-blows, bullet-shots and tear-gas. All this was not done by any individual or in any single province or any single state but it was done throughout India promptly and simultaneously and under the common and same orders. It was all done under the well-considered and well-planned policy of the Government and persued vigorously throughout India by the Govern-

ment. Its responsibility was solely of the Government and not of the people. It was all an organised attempt to crush the people and crush them so badly that they may not be able to raise their heads erect or even their voice, however feeble it may be, against the British administration in India.

The flux of all the ordinances, the wide and strict application of the D. I. Rules, the simultaneous execution of arrest-warrants against thousands of Congressmen which were prepared and signed much before the message of the "Quit India" resolution by the A. I. C. C., at Bombay, and above all, the elaborate police and military arrangements to carry out all this, at a stroke like a swift-shock of electricity or a feat of Magic-show could not be done without full and previous preparations. The Congress actually gave out no programme or plan of its intended movement. There were no open or secret instructions for carrying out the movement. It was to be developed and devised according to the needs and circumstances and more correctly was to be revealed to Gandhiji at the proper time. But the Government was not depending on future revelations nor was waiting for the future development of the situation. They had a well-decided and carefully chalked out and worked-out plan on which they started their attack on the Congress.

Here, we quote below, from a speech of Mr. K. C. Neogy in Central Assembly, in September, 1942, demanding an enquiry into allegations of "excesses committed by the police and the military :—

"I have asked for a Committee of enquiry and I understand that the Government are in no mood to concede this demand. I must say that I was not quite unprepared for this attitude because already we have communiques issued by the Governments of the Central Provinces and of the United Provinces firmly taking their stand on the point and stating that in the case of the Central Provinces Government they have no intention of holding a judicial or any other enquiry into the measures which have so far been taken to restore order and that any such measure would only tend to affect the morale of the forces employed to counter the disturbances. I have already given to the House an idea of the technique which they adopt to counter these disturbances. The Central Provinces Government have gone one better. They have refused permission to the High Court Bar Association to hold a non-official enquiry in regard to the police excesses which they wanted to hold.

In the case of the United Provinces Government, they say that "The morale of the police is high,"—of course, it is high as you have already seen from the various instances to which

I have drawn attention of the House—the Inspector General of Police has given them the watchword 'Guard the people'. We know how they have been guarding the people, incidentally enriching themselves and burning down the property belonging to people. In order to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding the United Provinces communique says that the United Provinces Government wishes to make it quite clear that no public enquiry will be held into the incidents arising from the disturbances.

The only conclusion to which one can come to from these communiques is that the acts to which I have drawn attention have been deliberately done, and the same policy has been pursued everywhere with the full knowledge and concurrence of these provincial administrations. If anything, these declarations made by the two Provincial Governments are a direct encouragement to the police and the military to continue these outrages, these acts of vandalism which the police and the military have been perpetrating on innocent people. If anything, this is likely to aggravate the situation beyond measure. I have no desire at all to say anything, or ask the Government to do anything, which will in any way weaken their hands in regard to any legitimate use of force which may be required for the purpose of meeting the situation. But I should like to warn the Government that they have already allowed the situation to get out of their hands, and it is high time that they sought to control their unruly hordes which were let loose on innocent people."

We may also quote below an extract from the speech of Mr. N. M. Joshi in support of Mr. Neogy's motion :—

"I cannot absolve the Government of India from their responsibility for the violence that has taken place in the country on account of the wrong policy which they followed in arresting the leaders of the Congress. It has appeared from the speeches of the representatives of Government that nothing has happened between the resolution passed by the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay and the violence that has taken place. The Government should have known that the arrest of the leaders of the Congress had intervened between the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee and the violence. I thought that the Members of the Government of India are honest. They would themselves admit that the arrest of the Congress leaders, at least to some extent, led to the violent protests by the people.

The point to be considered is this, that we want an inquiry into these excesses. The Government of India themselves will not say that there was no likelihood of excesses. The

Honourable Home Member said in his speech the other day that if there were any cases of excesses or injustice, they should be brought to the notice of the Provincial Governments or of the military authorities who, in the opinion of the Government of India, would do justice. We do not think that either the Provincial Government or the military authorities or even the Government of India would do justice. The Provincial Governments themselves announced beforehand that there would be no public enquiry, and by making that announcement they gave direct encouragement to some of the excesses committed by the police and the military. I would also say this, that the Government of India by giving full freedom to provincial Governments and to local authorities themselves encouraged the commission of some of the excesses which have been described and which have taken place in all parts of the country on many occasions.

I feel, therefore, that the Government of India should accept this challenge by the Assembly for the finding out of the truth. If the officers of the Government of India had done nothing wrong, the committee will declare them not guilty ; but if they have done wrong, the committee will find them guilty. I do not know whether the police or military officers will be punished or not ; but I am afraid that the highest authorities responsible for the commission of these excesses by the police and military, namely the Provincial Governments of India now escape the consequences of even the decision of the Committees against them.

The Government opposition to any enquiry into the allegations of the military and police excesses itself is a positive and strong proof of the Government responsibility for the general repression in the country.

Rai Bahadur Sri Narain Mehta in his speech on 23rd September, in the Council of State said :—

"It is neither a students' movement nor a Congress movement, nor even a Fifth Column attempt to sabotage India's war effort. It is the desperate gesture of a nation before whom you have dangled the offer of political freedom, a nation exasperated beyond the limits of human patience, a nation that has seen the anomaly of having to protect a freedom that it does not enjoy".

Mr. Neogy, in his speech of the 17th Sept. in the Central Assembly said :—

"The recent disturbances are to be ascribed to many complex factors, all of which are not directly political in character and in ignoring the seething discontent prevaling for a long time in the country, the Government were unwittingly helping to set the stage for the violent outburst which we

Government Rest House. It is comparatively a rich village, having Sardar-like big families of Naiks and Begdes with their big old wadas. The place is politically conscious and has got branches of the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh, Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress.

No consistent story can be traced of the recent happenings which took place on Nagapanchami, the 16th August, 1942, as all the male population of the place is either under arrest or has fled. But from elaborate investigations made by me the following appears to me to be a true description of the events. Certain Congressmen of Chimur were arrested by the police on 16th August. This was followed by firing and lathi charges on a procession. Nothing has yet been established of the casualties due to the firing, but the report is that the firing was heavy and continued until the ammunition was exhausted. Thereupon the infuriated mob, which the firing had failed to disperse, set upon the police party, resulting in the death of Sub-divisional Officer, one Circle Inspector of Police, one Naib Tehsildar and a police constable. The crowd is also said to have burnt the bodies. The mob then went on to block the only communication to Warora. They blocked it for over two miles by cutting big huge trees and spreading their trunks and branches over the road, and by damaging a culvert which crosses a brook.

The District Magistrate at Chanda, hearing rumours of strange happenings at Chimur, started for the place with a party of 50 armed police on 17th August. But when he found the road blocked and heard of the real happenings he felt diffident about his small force and went back. He represented to the local Government that there was a very big armed rebellion in the jungle of Chimur, which could not be put down without a strong regiment of white soldiers fully equipped. Really speaking, had the District Magistrate not lost courage and been equal to his responsibilities, he could have managed the situation with the 50 armed police with which he had started on the first day.

On the 19th a special train reached the station of Warora with 200 white soldiers and 50 Indians, fully equipped with military buses for their transport to Chimur—33 miles off. The D.M. with this party and his 50 armed policemen immediately started for Chimur and clearing the way reached Chimur. The District Magistrate, who is unfortunately an Indian, was mad with rage and revenge. The terror-stricken people, big or small, hid themselves in their houses either in big wadas or in cottages and barred the door from inside. There was none to be found in the streets and the whole village appeared

to be deserted. The D.M. took some troops with guns and muskets and went to the wadas of big persons first and then to the houses of others, broke them open and hunted out every male member and got them beated and arrested, excluding only old and young ones. Thus he effected over 120 arrests that day. He had now to arrange for the food of the military, or in his words, the guests of the villagers, who had invited them to protect themselves from the goondas. It was, therefore, the duty of the villagers to provide for their "invited guests". He transferred this duty to the police with full powers. They broke open the stores of the men who were under arrest. Then the police poured into the military camps cart-loads of big copper and brass utensils for cooking, bags of sugar, wheat, rice, fuel, tins of kerosene, ghee, oil etc. The village was then systematically plundered. Houses of well-to-do and rich men were entered and safes containing gold and silver rifled. Silk sarees were torn and scattered or handed to the Indian soldiers and police. They amused themselves with harmoniums and used kitchens as latrines. Women were raped but in many cases women linked themselves together hand in hand and put up successful resistance. But whereas in some of the poorer houses a single woman was found left alone the most shocking outrages occurred. There are reports of cases of women in advanced pregnancy, newly delivered ones with bleeding in menses, and girls of tender age are being strangled. This does not mean that there are hundreds of such cases or that over 50% of women population is molested as the rumours are. But such cases there are and in good many numbers which can only be traced if a responsible non-official enquiry is held.

This state of things reigned for 2 days. At last an old lady, Daibai Begde, took courage and reached the D. M. through the guns and bayonets of the patrolling guards somehow. She narrated to him the whole situation and asked if there were no ladies in his house. The D.M. is said to have told her that their husbands, sons and brothers had invited the military and it was the natural outcome of that ; still he would enquire into the matter and give them protection. He thereupon called the military and police together and told them not to trouble the womenfolk. This helped to quieten matters to a certain extent, but did not serve much purpose.

In the meantime the local Government had imposed collective fine of one lac of rupees on the village and its surroundings. After the departure of the military on the 26th, collection of fine began in earnest and the money was extorted without difficulty from the terrorised womenfolk, the men having either fled away or been arrested.

Thus the above mentioned three stages of the tyranny, viz, (1) beating and arrest, (2) looting, plundering, and (3) legalised loot or the collection of fines are over. And now reigns the fourth stage of tyranny of investigation of offences. During the first three stages no outsider dared to approach the village either through fear or want of proper information. But now, although the Government say that there is no restriction on persons going to Chimur, still any outsider going to Chimur is put to hardships and humiliations. The D. M. is managing the situation in such a way that no outsider could go to the village till at least the investigations were over, lest, he is afraid, the investigations be hampered. Thus the village of Chimur which now consists mainly of female population is cut off from the outside world for the last seven weeks and is under the control of uncultured and uncontrolled police. Only recently a party of well-educated ladies from Nagpur, who were mostly graduates, visited the place as relatives of some residents there. On reaching there the S.D.O. threatened them. But when they were found a match to his threatening he sent two constables after them and guarded their lodging with a guard of 8 policemen so that they may not get out of the houses. This is what is meant by the restrictions in going to Chimur, mentioned in the letter of the Chief Secretary to the Government addressed to the President, Bar Association, Chanda, dated 31st August.

The fifth stage of this ordial, the summary trial of all those already arrested, is yet to come. In private talks the D. M. said to have stated that several persons were to be hanged. There are about 400 arrests in the case, and if this 'several' means hanging of over 100 persons the fate of the poor women, who have suffered the previous ordeals with courage and endurance, is doomed. Go to Chimur and you will find every house in mourning; meet any woman of Chimur and you will find her with tears in eyes imploring you to try to release husband, brother or son."

(From a statement of Shri
Valunjkar, an inmate of Gandhiji's
Wardha Ashram.)

"Motichand Nanakchand was finded Rs. 10,000. He sent wires to the Governor and the D.C. to say that his shop was already looted to the extent of things worth Rs. 10,000. He then received the following reply from the D. C. :—

"Serious coercive measures will be started to-morrow noon."

A man's entire property worth Rs. 50,000 was taken away. Another man's entire property worth Rs. 1,800 was taken away. Nuri Bhora was fined Rs. 2,000, another Muslim

Rs. 1,000. Till 3rd September fines amounting to Rs. 85,000 had been realized. Later, in accordance with the Central Government's policy, the fines of the Muslims were remitted."

(From the account about Chimur issued by the Congress authorities at Bombay.)

Dr. Moonje and Mr. M.N. Ghatak, who enquired personally into these affairs, gave the following connected account :—

"Our visits commenced with the visit to Ramtek first on Saturday the 19th and here we were accompanied by Mr. Layard, the Deputy Commissioner of Nagpur. Mr. Layard came to us in his own motor and we left for Ramtek at 8-30 and reached there about 10 a. m. First we visited the Railway Station, which though repaired, still bore quite visible signs of damage from hooliganism and fire. We met and interrogated the Station Master and his Assistant. They told us that on the day of the occurrence, a mob of about 500 men, composed of Hindus and Moslems with an admixture of Coolies with crowbars and from the Mines nearby, came to the Station invading it from all sides. Their very first act was to cut all the telegraphic wires. Next they entered the booking office and took possession of whatever cash was found. While this was going on, one portion of the mob, on one side entered the Lamp Room and taking possession of the Kerosene oil tins, set the station building on fire ; and on the other side, another portion went over to the rail track and with their cowbars, began to tamper with it. Just at that time, a train from Nagpur came in but not getting the signal, had to be piloted to the platform. The train was emptied of the passengers and the first and second class Bogie was immediately set on fire.

"Besides these, two significant incidents happened at the Station. When the mob first collected at the Station, they found a Sub-Inspector of Police in uniform in charge of the prisoners arrested during the previous evening in a public meeting held to organise the mass movement. Immediately the prisoners were released and the Sub-Inspector was made a a captive. About the same time, as mentioned above, a train from Nagpur arrived on the platform, and amongst the passengers was found another Sub-Inspector who was returning from Nagpur to go to his Police Station at Ramtek. He was also made a captive. These two captive Sub-Inspectors were then made to take off their uniforms and to wear Gandhi caps. The mob then formed into a procession and with these two captive Sub-Inspectors holding Congress flags in their hands marching in front, the procession went towards the town. When this procession reached near the Police Station and

the Tehsil building, the mob saw them surrounded by another mob of a bigger size of Hindus and Moslems shouting the same Congress slogans. Being satisfied with having made the two Inspectors of Police put on Gandhi caps and shout the Congress slogans and finding greater attraction in the doings of the bigger mob surrounding the Tehsil, the first mob ran towards and joined the Tehsil mob, leaving behind the two captive Sub-Inspectors of Police to themselves. These two captive Sub-Inspectors of Police and also the Railway Station staff officials were in no way molested or hurt.

We next went and inspected the Police Station and the Tehsil building. The Tehsil building was completely burnt. The door and the lock of the Treasury room was broken open and the Treasury was looted. We were shown the hind wall of the Treasury Room which was broken open to secure an entrance into the room; it is now repaired. The wall and the doors were broken open by the use of crowbars.

"We next went to a building of the Hospital where the Sub-Inspectors of Police are now holding their office. Here we interrogated the various officials. One Head Constable Moharrior, when interrogated, narrated his story as follows:— When he saw the mob invading the buildings, he asked the Tehsildar for permission to use his rifle and shoot. The Tehsildar told him that there is no need to shoot as the leaders of the mob are saying that they will only plant their Congress flag on the buildings and then disperse.

"We next saw the Post Office which also had been burnt, and then went straight to Umbala. We took our seats in the Sarai and the men of Umbala village assembled to meet us. We first interrogated the prominent Pandas, the Religious Priests of the place. They all told us that for two successive days, Mahar Sepoys of the Mahar Battalion stationed at Ramtek took control of the situation, visited the Umbala village in company with the Mahar Naib Tehsildar and forcibly entered their houses, broke open doors, and took away whatever cash and notes they could find in them. When they were being prevented and in some cases also resisted from entering their houses, these Mahar Sepoys would struggle with them and in such struggle, sometimes their home Deities were polluted and scattered and food utensils containing cooking food were thrown about. Two of these Pandas complained that they were also beaten with sticks. A tall well-built old man, who recognised Dr. Moonje and reminded him of his being a member of the Nagpur Municipality and of having worked with him in securing to Dr. Cholkar the Presidentship of the Nagpur Municipality in that year, came forward and narrated his own story. Mahar Sepoys entered

his house and went, in spite of his remonstrance, through all the rooms, polluted his kitchen, broke open doors and boxes, and brought a box in which were Rs. 110 in cash and some currency notes. They took away some notes and Rupee one in cash.

"It is said, though no one deposed in our presence, that Mahar Sepoys went to the Umbala Tank and bathed in it. The guardsman of the main Temple, however, deposed in our presence that some of these Mahar Sepoys, announcing themselves as Marathas, went forcibly inside the temple with their boots taken off but did not do any damage inside the temple or to the Chief Deity. It is to be noted with great satisfaction that, by taking off their boots before entering the Temple, they showed respect and observed the sanctity of the Temple, as they were Hindus.

"We did not get any report of molestation of women, though we are told that two cases of rape by the Sepoys have actually happened.

"It was now 1 p. m. and we returned to town. We assembled at the house of Mr. Bhayyasaheb Totade. Here we met prominent people of the town and they told us their hearsay story as above. It was now 2 p. m. We left Ramtek and reached back Nagpur by 2 p. m.

"While the Sepoys were playing pranks in the Umbala village, two Brahmins—Pandas—were beaten with sticks and their sacred threads were torn off by them. The Mahar Naib Tehsildar also beat a few of the men with his own stick. The Mahar Sepoys entered the Garh forcibly by breaking open the door of the first Gate while going from the town to Ramtek to Garh. There is a rule strictly observed from olden times that untouchables are not allowed to enter the Temple.

"We were told that these visitations by the Sepoys in search of money supposed to be the looted property of the Tehsil, were unauthorised. The Mahar Naib Tehsildar utterly failed to recognise his responsibility in the matter.

"On 22nd September we left in the morning for Ashti with the Commissioner of the Nagpur Division in his motor. While nearing Ashti, a few miles away from it, a bridge on the road appeared tampered with. It was destroyed on the day of the occurrence ; so that no motors may be able to pass to Ashti from Nagpur. Further on we saw several Babool trees that were felled and said to have been put across the road to serve as blocks to prevent motors and lorries running along that road to Ashti. We reached Ashti at about 11 a. m. The Deputy Commissioner of Wardha had reached Ashti only a few minutes ahead of us ; Mr. Ali Akhtar reached Ashti soon after. He is in-charge of investigation of the incidents

that happened at Ashti. We all settled down in a building of the Hospital. We immediately went to see the Buildings of the Police Station that had been burnt down. We were shown the spots where the Officials were killed and burnt and from where a Police Constable fired a shot and killed a man—a Moslem–who was with the invading mob. We also saw from a distance that the roof of the A. V. School was burnt down and were further told that the furniture of the Hindu Girls School was also destroyed by fire. The invading mobs were composed of Hindus and Moslems, mostly from the surrounding villages. They came in two waves one after the other, at an interval of about an hour.

"After the inspection of the spots, we returned to our place where we were staying. Here Mr. Ali Akhtar narrated all the incidents as they happened. He told us that a Moslem in the mob was shot down by the Police. He gave us a pathetic description of how the Police Officials were killed and burnt.

"We next interviewed the responsible people of the town, Ashti, who were invited to meet us. They all told us in one voice that Sub-Inspector of Police who was killed was very popular with the people and they were shocked when they heard of the report of his death. They gave Shelter to the families of the murdered Police Officials both Hindus and Moslems. They further told us that one Moslem, from the mob which was composed of Hindus and Moslems mostly from the surrounding villages, was shot down by the Police. They further told us that during the day after the Police Officials were killed and the buildings were burnt, there being nobody to maintain order in the town, great confusion and anarchy prevailed and there was general looting of grain in the village though on a small scale. Moslems and Hindus were mingled in the looting. They further told us that from the next day, when the Sub-Divisional Officer Mr. Mehta came to the town with Indian Military, complete order and peace prevailed and confidence was restored. They were unsparing in their praise for the balanced temper and administrative abilities of the Sub-Divisional Officer, Mr. Mehta. The Indian Military was strictly not allowed to enter the town; but they were provided with food and comforts. They have no complaints against the Indian Military who were stationed at Ashti. Individual cases of victims of mob looting in the town can still be discovered and we have reports of some of them. They further told us that since the day of the happenings the A. V. Middle School, which is mostly attended by Hindu students, and Hindu Girls' School have been closed down. The Urdu School used by the Moslem is not closed and is running as usual. They complained of the great inconvenience that is caused by the closing

down of the two Hindu Schoools, one for boys and the other for girls. Thus we finished our business in Ashti. We then returned to Nagpur via Arvi and Wardha. We reached back Nagpur by midnight.

"On 25th September, we went by the Grand Trunk Express to Warora. The Commissioner, Nagpur Division, also went by the same train with us to Warora. The Deputy Commissioner of Bhanda met us at Warora; we all passed the night at the Warora Dak Bungalow. In the morning of 26th, we went in two separate cars to Chimur and reached there at about 10 a.m. On the way about 3 miles from Chimur, there is a bridge which was demolished by a riotous mob on the day of the occurrences. It was shown to us by the Deputy Commissioner of Chanda who also showed us, further on, the spots where the Circle Inspector of Police and a constable were killed and burnt. We also saw, the trees that were felled to serve as blocks on the road to prevent motors and lorries coming by the road to Chimur.

"We next saw the Dak bungalow which was completely burnt down, with its out-houses which were partially burnt. Here we met a Chowkidar of the Dak bungalow who, being interrogated, told us how the Sub-Divisional Officer, Mr. Dungaji, and the Naib Tehsildar, were killed. The Chowkidar somehow escaped from the mob and ran away for his life.

"We then went into the town of Chimur and settled ourselves in a room of a building of the Hospital. We then walked down to see the buildings of the Police Station and the School. They were all partially burnt. Here we were told that men who were arrested from the town, about 150 in number, were accomodated in the 2 or 4 small rooms of the Police Station building and some were put in the small cattle-pound which was open on the top, being practically without roof. We were further told that in those days it was raining frequently. We were surprised that such a large number of men should have been crowded and confined in such rooms and particularly in the open cattle-pound exposed to rains. The Deputy Commissioner admitted that, there being no other accomodation available, these men had to be kept in such small rooms and in the open cattle-pound exposed to rain. To us it appeared a sort of a Black-Hole, and we leave it to be imagined how the men would have suffered in such overcrowding.

"We then took a round in the town to go to the house of Mr. Begde who is an old man about 60 years of age and one of the well-to-do men of the town. His wife, Mrs. Begde, came up to the verandah and, recognising the Deputy Commissioner, welcomed us all in a tone of humiliation and

agony of mind. We all, including the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner, set down in the verandah and cajoling the old lady, Mrs. Begde, and appealing to her sense of dignity and self-respect, brought her round to give us a complete story of molestations of women and outrages on women of the town,

"She then sent for and collected several women of the town who, with feelings of shame and outraged dignity, narrated their separate tales of molestations and actual rapes. Seventeen women all narrated their own stories; out of these 17 women, 14 were actually raped, some by more than one white soldier, and the rest 4 were only molested. The women in great agony of mind gave expression to their desire of revenge to be taken by their menfolk if God Almighty so willed.

"Mrs. Begde is a remarkable lady of courage and leadership, and she told us of an incident in the face of the Deputy Commissioner who was sitting by our side. She said that one day she, in the midst of the shameful bother of white soldiers coming to her house in batches frequently throughout the day and late in the night also, mustered courage and, though challenged frequently by the soldiers and the Police, went up straight to the Deputy Commissioner and told him of her trouble. The Deputy Commissioner, bluntly and heartlessly retorted. "Who has invited this trouble? Who brought these white Soldiers? It is your menfolk, your husbands and brothers". She was stunned. But soon, however, the Deputy Commissioner appeared to relent and ordered the soldiers not to do any mischief in the town.

"Of the women so molested, was the daughter of one of the Naik families who was raped by one white soldier and a police constable. They then took away a gold ring from her finger and extorted Rs. 10 from her mother, who being an old lady, was removed to another room and had to stand this shameful affair hopelessly, the menfolk of her household having been previously, arrested and removed to the lock-up. She comes from one of the highly respected Naik families of the town. Another lady, who is pregnant and whose modesty was grossly outraged, is the wife of the Sar-Panch, that is, the President of the Village Panchayat. She is Tali by caste, and the former lady is Brahmin by caste.

"As for looting and destrcution of the household furniture, safes, boxes, almirahs, wearing apparel and foodgrains, it is incalculable, but the sight of this destruction in the rooms of the several houses is heart-rending. Both the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner saw this destruction with their

own eyes in company with us. Aghast Dr. Moonje exclaimed in their very presence : "Are we in British Raj ? Or are we in Moghul Raj ?" We have been provided by our friends with a list of some 10 or 12 houses of well-to-do people of the town, where it appears this kind of loots and destruction of property was indulged in freely with impunity.

"Having thus finished our enquiry in the town, we returned to our place for meals about 2 p. m. After meals, the Sub-Inspector of Police in charge of the Police Station, being interrogated, described the happenings as they happened. He told us that the mob was composed of Hindus and Moslems, and that men who held public meetings and addressed them were school masters and Congress leaders of the town. He did not mention any name from the respectable families of the town such as the Naiks or the Hegdes. He told us of his conversation with Sant Tukdoji Maharaj. He went to see him in his own house where there was a large gathering of his disciples. In their presence and in their hearing, Tukdoji Maharaja said :—"You are the Sub-Inspector, you do your own duty. These people, being Congressmen pledged to non-violence, will remain non-violent." It was now about 4 p. m. We now left the town to return to Warora but on our way we went to see one woman, Tali by caste and Ashtakkar by name, in her own house. She was ill and had delivered only a few days ago. Her mother-in-law was also sitting by her side. She told us how she was caught hold of by a Police Constable and raped, pregnant though she was. We then went by way of the Naik houses and entering them we saw with our own eyes the shocking spectacle of the destruction of the household furniture. We next took our cars and reached back Warora by about 7 p. m. We spent the night in the Dak Bungalow, and taking the Grand Trunk Express next morning reached back Nagpur on the 27th. Thus finished our inspection."

Having come to know of our arrival in Chimur, several people both from the surrounding villages and from the town itself, some with written applications, came to see us and complained to us about the exhorbitancy and unjust and unbalanced levy of fines and particularly of the ruthless and heartless manner in which the fines were collected. It may have added to the prestige of the collecting officials in the Government as most efficient and capable, but at what moral cost to the Government ? We could see the discontent and misery depicted on their faces. Even the women and the ladies whom we had occasion to interview, complained loudly in the same manner. Of the several receipts showed us by the women, I remember of a woman, by name Radhabai,

if I now remember her name well, having shown me two receipts of Rs. 500 each, which showed that Rs. 1000 was paid through her. In the case of women, the particular point to note was that immediately after the incident most of their men-folk, including bread-winners and managers of their respective households were arrested and taken to the lock-up and it was in their absence and before the women could get over the terror and horror inspired by the terrible incident which they had not conceived in their wildest of dreams, that the military in groups, accompanied by the local Police and other Officials, were sent to their homes, bent on using terroristic measures to expedite realisation of the fines I leave it to the Government .to imagine what horror, what shame and what misery must have been thus caused.

We are told on reliable evidence that a Moslem merchant of Chimur was utilized to give cash to those Hindus who were in need of it to pay fines on selling their gold and silver to him. We are told that the Moslem merchant secured, by thus paying cash, 400 tolas of gold 4,500 tolas of silver and gold at from Rs. 20 to Rs. 40 per tola and silver at from 4 annas to 6 annas per tola. If this story be true, gold and silver were sold and purchased dirt cheap. If true, nothing can show better straits the people were reduced to in finding cash to pay the fines within a few days. How much of coercion must have been exercised and what misery caused. This matter deserves immediate enquiry.

It will have been noted from the foregoing portions of our report the Moslems were not inconspicuous in taking part in the activities of mob-hooliganism in the towns we visited. This fact is now beyond question; but it is not for us to complain about it. However, we regard it as our duty to put on record our opinion that is actions like these that confirm the impression among the masses that the Government in their policy of divide and rule, is favouring Moslems at the moral and material cost of the Hindus. Can it not be imagined how it will disturb the inter-Communal amity between Moslems and Hindus living side by as neighbours in far-off villages by creating needless jealousy from the rise of feelings of supposed superiority and inferiority in the minds of the Moslems and the Hindus?

Besides, this differentiation is based on injustice. If the Muslim League, which is, however, not the representative organisation of all the Moslems in the country, has announced its dissatisfaction from this movement of the Congress. It should be no news to the Government that the Hindu Mahasabha has always opposed the Congress policy of Civil Disobedience and non-co-operation. Therefore, if the Moslems

of the Muslim League are to be exempted, why should not then the Hindus of the Hindu Mahasabha be given the same concession ? We are, however, content to leave the matter to the discretion of the Government.

From what we have seen with our eyes in our visits to Ramtek, Ashti, and Chimur, we feel no hesitation whatsoever in recommending to the Government that a Committee of enquiry be appointed to investigate into the happenings. Matters for enquiry are whether the force used to quell the disturbances was needlessly excessive and whether there was any need for destruction of domestic property as has been done so wantonly. Above all, the outrages committed on women in Chimur cry for some definite act of justice and retribution.

We are making this recommendation in spite of the knowledge that we have of Government's disinclination in the matter. Even believing that the action of the Government in quelling the disturbances was warranted on the ground that the Congress movement, as some may say, was an act of war or, as the Congress itself or Mahatma Gandhi himself describes, is an act of open rebellion, still the obligations of civilized of warfare cannot be got over morally. We have often heard of the barbarities including outrages on women alleged to have been committed by Germany and Japan ; and we read in the papers of 10th October that in the House of Lords, on 7th October, the question of dealing with the war criminals was raised by Viscount Maugham. In reply, the Lord Chancellor, Viscount Simon, announced that a Commission of the United Nations would be appointed for the investigations of war crimes.

Viscount Simon said, 'If this time the prepetrators of the abominable war crimes are to receive due punishment, it would be a grave mistake at the stage to concern ourselves merely with the minutia of juridical analysis. Two prerequisites are necessary ; first, to procure evidence, and secondly, to secure the persons accused."

Why should not a similar largeness of heart or anxiety be shown in respect of the happenings in India and particularly in our Province ?

We would like to put on record our impressions on three points : firstly, why were the police unable to protect Government property and defend themselves ; secondly, why nothing terrible happened in Ashti, though 5 officials were killed and why such horror was perpetrated at Chimur, where only 4 officials were killed, and why there was no loss of life in Ramtek ; and thirdly, how was the behaviour of the officials ?

As for the first point, it is well worth noting that in the three places we visited there was enough police with rifles and cartridges. In Ramtek, we are told, there were 10 Police Constables and two Sub-Inspectors with 10 rifles and 250 cartridges; in Ashti 4 constables and one Sub-Inspector, with 4 rifles and 100 cartridges; and in Chimur 3 constables and one Sub-Inspector with 3 rifles and about 75 cartridges.

From the point of defence, we would give first place to the position on which the buildings of Ramtek were standing and second and third places respectively to those of Ashti and Chimur. There was enough open ground in front of the Ramtek building. The open ground in front of the Ashti buildings was smaller than that in Ramtek, but in Chimur there was practically no ground. If at Ramtek and at Ashti, the Police constables under the order of their Sub-Inspectors had taken a firm stand and had, with a determined resolve, warned the approaching mob before they arrived within 50 yards to halt, shown fight and even fired one or two rounds each, we feel sure that the mob would have been kept at bay and eventually dispersed. This was, however, not possible in Chimur, as there was no open ground in front; shooting at mobs from quite near when actually surrounded on all sides is not only useless but actually provocative.

But the question is why did the police, though armed with rifles and provided with cartridges, not shoot at the mobs when at a distance? Our reply is that in view of the traditional Congress policy of non-violence, consistently and earnestly pursued during the last 22 years, no one believed that the mob, composed of the more or less familiar faces of the town and generally led by the educated youths of the higher classes, would indulge in violence and actual killing of human beings. We have evidence that at Ramtek the Sub-Inspectors were not on duty at the Police Station at the time and thus the constables were without their Officers. Besides we have evidence, as mentioned above, that the Tehsildar actually dissuaded, acting on this hypothesis, the Police constable from shooting. He appears to have honestly believed in the words of the leaders of the mob probably known and familiar to him, that they intended only to plant the Congress Flag on the building and then to disperse. The behaviour of the Sub-Inspector of Ashti towards the mob is more evidence of this hypothesis. When the mob assembled at the closed gate of the Police Station, the Sub-Inspector actually went down to meet them and argue with them. We believe that there is a great deal of truth in what Mr. Newsam, an Englishman I. C. S., Special Judge at Chittor, Madras Presidency, said

while giving judgment in what is known as the Pannapakkan, train derailment case. He said: The idea of wrecking trains in the manner described by the prosecution was foreign to the genius of the Indian mind and terribly antagonistic to it. Similarly the idea of actually killing in cold blood quite innocent persons, known to them and often popular with them, is most loathsome to the genius of the Indian people. This does account for no loss life in Ramtek.

We are told that the Police Constables are not given enough of target practice and therefore they were not efficient shots.

Contrasting the situation as comprehended by us at Ashti with that at Chimur, we have no hesitation in saying that, if the Officials at Chimur had been as tactful and endowed with fellow-feeling as those at Ashti, perhaps the horrible incidents that have happened at Chimur after the deplorable incidents of the mob-hooliganism, would not have taken place.

We have already mentioned how the people of Ashti were full of appreciation of the temperament and administrative qualities of the Sub-Divisional Office, but quite different was the state of affairs in Chimur. The Sub-Inspector of Police in charge at Chimur has told us how the Circle Inspector was tactless and provocative in his dealings with the mob; but though provocative, he did not use the rifle and was content with mere threat of shooting at the mob. Besides he was frequently saying that the Sub-Divisional Officer was at the Dak Bungalow with a large posse of Police. We believe it was this behaviour of the Circle Inspector, who is now dead, which had provoked and enraged the mob into killing the Officers.

The Military at Chimur were not kept under control as at Ashti. We are sorry to say that the Deputy Commissioner of Chanda, who was on the spot, was not above fault.

We are very thankful to the Government and to the Commissioner of the Nagpur Division and the Deputy Commissioners of Nagpur and Wardha for the kind help and facilities they have given in our humanitarian work. We thank also the Deputy Commissioner of Chanda for having accompanied us.

The following ladies, including a doctor, also visited Chimur in the third week of Sepfember 1942:—

1. Mrs. Ramabai Tambe, B.A., B.T., the wife of Mr. B. S. Tambe, former acting Governor of C. P. She herself has also been a member of the C. P. Legislature.

2 Dr. Mrs. Durgatai Wazalwar, M.B., B.S., practising physician.

3. Mrs. Vimalabai Deshpande, M.A. wife of Mr. P. Y. Deshpande, Advocate.

4. Mrs. Dwarkabai Deoskar.

5. Miss. Vimlabai Abhyankar, B.A., daughter of the late Mr. Abhyankar, Bar-at-law (M.L.A. Central).

Their report is given below :—

"The Chimur outrage was a bye-word for the worst kind of military excesses. News reached us that not only were the menfolk arrested in masses and their houses looted, but defenceless women were outraged on a big scale. Nobody was, however, allowed to visit Chimur as long as the village was under military raj. About the second week of September, the bus service from Warora was open and there was some semblance of conditions returning to normal. Three of us, therefore, Mrs. Dwarkabai Deoskar, Miss Vimalabai Abhyankar and Mrs. Vimalabai Deshpande decided to go to Chimur and see things for ourselves. We were advised to take some male escort with us, but we declined. We left Nagpur for Warora on the 18th by the morning train. We spent the whole day at Warora, because we found that we could gather a great deal of first hand information about Chimur from people who witnessed things during those days of military excesses and who were now staying in Warora with their relatives. We also learnt that a Munim of the Naik of Chimur named Baliram who got the application of the outraged and molested women of Chimur prepared was arrested a day or two before our arrival. We were, therefore, warned by some people not to risk going to Chimur. The next day, 19th September 1942, we started for Chimur by the morning bus. We had sent a man to Chimur the day before to let Mrs. Seetabai Naik know that we were going to stay with her, and that if she was asked to state her relation to us, she was to say that we were her nieces and that she was our aunt. This precaution was needed, because only relatives were allowed to visit people in Chimur. As soon as the bus stopped at the motor-stand, the Muslim Sub-Inspector of the place came out of the police station and stood near the bus; when we got down, he asked out names in such an insulting and rude manner as to make anybody angry. But we had to keep our temper in control. As soon as we wrote down our names he asked us where we were going; he told us in the same rude and insulting manner that since Section 144 was promulgated there, we were not to hold any meeting, nor see anybody nor make any enquiry. We said that we had not come to make enquiries but only to see some people. He replied to us in the same rude manner that it was his

duty to warn us. We then started to go to Naik's place. As soon as our backs turned, the Sub-Inspector ordered a constable in a loud voice to send police in mufti to follow us and watch our movements. We expected all this treatment. No sooner had we reached the Naik's house, than the whole big house was under police watch. Word was sent to us by the Sub-Inspector that we were not to stir out of the house nor was anybody to see us in the house. We, however, asked the policeman to inform the Sub-Inspector that we were going to visit the Balaji temple that evening. For a time we were at a loss to know how to get the outraged women to come to this house to relate their stories; but we soon found the way. We sent the Naik's Munim to ask the women to come to the Naik's wada on the pretext of taking buttermilk. This arrangement worked to a certain extent and a few women came and related the harrowing tales of those days of atrocities. The whole atmosphere of the wada was surcharged with mortal fear as was evident from the very movements of the women. From every window we could see a policeman. On our arrival, we had sent words to Mrs. Dadibai Cadge, a lady who had bravely faced the military raj and protected her neighbours to come and see us. But her house also was watched and she could not stir out. In the evening, we started to visit the Balaji temple. On our way we stood outside Dadibai's house and called her to accompany us in a tone showing familiarity. Dadibai understood and came out. We all went together, but we talked about nothing but the Balaji of Chimur and Balajis of other places. We had to keep us appearances. When we reached the temple, one of us kept watch and the other two talked to Dadibai in undertones. This brave woman was so terror-stricken that she could not relate much to us. She talked in general terms only. After some time we left the temple, but Dadibai went out before we left, so terrified she was to go with us. The terror-stricken atmosphere of the whole village weighed on us. Late in the evening, Mrs. Tambe, Dr. Mrs. Wazalwar from Nagpur and Mr. Walunjkar from Wardha came to Chimur. They also met with the same rudeness from the Sub-Inspector. But when they showed him letters from the D.C. and the Commissioner which they brought with them, he had to soften. The police watch round the houses of Naik and Bagade was also relaxed after this.

The next morning, Mrs. Tambe and Mrs. Wazalwar came to see us. We showed Mrs. Wazalwar a case of rape. She examined that girl and declared that the girl was only 12 or

13 years old and that it was a clear case of rape. When Mrs. Wazalwar examined this case and saw all the signs of the military raj in every room of Naik's wada, she was greatly agitated. She decided to visit the village from house to house since her party had the Commissioner's letter to protect her. She went to Chambharpura, Telipura and Balaripura, the scene of the worst excesses of the soldiers, and questioned several women. She could with great difficulty bring out from them the tales of the outrages. She examined the woman who had delivered and who was outraged by two soldiers on the 5th day of her delivery. The woman was almost dumb through fear. We were to leave Chimur by the afternoon bus. As the time for our departure approached, Mrs. Seetabai Naik, our kind hostess, who looked greatly relieved since our arrival, grew restless. She piteously told us that after we had left them they would again be harassed by the police and things might get worse. She, therefore, at once started to go to Mrs. Dadibai's place, where Mrs. Tambe and her party were putting up. She entreated Mrs. Tambe who came with the Commissioner's letter to do her best to get the Sub-Inspector transferred since he was the most notorious scoundrel. The sight of Mrs. Naik's restlessness also agitated us. We promised her that we would do our best but that we knew our powerlessness. At about three in the afternoon we left Chimur. From the tales of the women at Warora and Chimur, from the evidence obtained by Mrs. Wazalwar during her visit to the worst affected parts of Chimur, from the signs of looting everywhere, in evidence of the big wadas and from the outlook of the completely weighed down and terror-stricken atmosphere that we experienced during our short stay there we got a fairly good picture of the atrocities that were committed at Chimur during the fateful days of the 19th, 20th and 21st August 1942.

"As soon as the military entered on the 19th August it arrested almost all the menfolk and only children, women and old decrepit men were left behind. After removing the men, the soldiers took complete possession of all the houses, looted everything they could lay their hands on, outraged women to their hearts' content. In order to save themselves from this, many young women hid themselves under hay, fodder or any other dirty rubbish they could find. Women tried to protect themselves by keeping together in batches of 25 to 30. For two whole days, 20th and 21st August, the women and children could get nothing to eat and not even water to drink, since their houses were overrun and occupied

by soldiers. Their kitchen and provisions were for the soldiers alone. Even infants of a few months remained without milk, while all the milk, all the tea, all etables were at the disposal of the military. The whole military fed on Chimur and the people starved. The soldiers hunted young women from place to place and outraged them in the bye-lanes. No woman was safe. Even pregnant women, women who had just delivered and girls of 12 and 13 years of age were outraged. It may be interesting to note here that when our visit to Chimur was planned, enquiries were made as to whether there was any legal restrictions on persons wanting to go to Chimur.

"No less an authority than the Commissioner of Nagpur, Mr. P. S. Rau, who has the reputation of being a firm and fair-minded official, told Mrs. Tambe and Mr. Walunjkar that there was not and never had been any restriction on persons proceeding to Chimur. But Mrs. Tambe and Mr. Walunjkar having insisted on a letter, the Commissioner gave them a letter to the D. C. of Chanda. The experience we have had at Chimur, and the experiences which Mrs. Tambe and her party had at Chimur, conclusively convinced us that either the Commissioner was kept blissfully ignorant of the state of affairs prevailing in Chimur and of the ways of the local authorities, or that he feigned ignorance with a view to discrediting all sorts of stories about Chimur that were in circulation all over the province. However, we have come back from Chimur with the firm impression that there is not a vestige of any law in Chimur and that the place is haunted by the goonda-raj of the local police."

In order to ascertain correct facts about the tragedy at Chimur, Dr. Mrs. Wazalwar along with Mrs. Ramabai Tambe and some other ladies went to Chimur on the 19th September 1942, and her report runs as below :—

"It is no use repeating the atrocities as many visitors and sympathisers have given expression to them. I was also eager to get correct and first-hand information and not to fall a victim to idle gossip. After my return, I feel absolutely stunned, even to think of what I heard and saw, as with what little I know of past history I cannot remember any instance of such kind.

"I visited the place lane by lane. All the houses practically have no men-folk. Women are panic-stricken still. Visitors they saw and received with great suspicion. In many places I talked to them very casually. And none dare say anything except that the male members of the family were in jail for no fault of theirs. Some talked about looting, plundering and damage to property. On top of all the punitive

taxes, and how difficult it was for them to get the amount demanded. But no one said anything about molestation etc. Till 9 O'clock in the morning on the 20th I could not get any information about molestation of women. I then directly cross-examined them as to whether they remained free from molestation or outrage to their modesty. I saw the first hesitation on their faces, and then they told me that molestation occurred in Chambharpura, Telipura etc. So I went to Chambharpura first. We sat down to talk in a very homely way with the old ladies. We chatted on different points but they denied this particular kind of offence. In the morning, an old teli lady came to me and asked me the purpose of my visiting Chimur. I told her that I was anxious to get correct facts about molestation of ladies and also told her that to my surprise I had not come across a single instance except what I heard at the place were I was putting up. She could read my anxiety and volunteered to take me to all the houses where indecent assaults and molestation had occurred.

"I am giving below the terrible instances which are true to an inch, as no woman likes to admit such a thing both for the sake of her own reputation and for the dignity of the family. I could easily deduce that the families I had visited in the morning were trying to hide some facts from me. Still there were women who told me with their own lips that they were victims of unspeakable outrages:

THE STATEMENTS OF THE VICTIMS OF RAPE

The following are statements:—

Case No. 1. "While I was going to my grandmother's house an Indian soldier stopped me. I then went to the house nearby where he followed me. There was an old man in the house in whose presence the soldier dragged me aside and outraged me. I am a pregnant woman of 9 months and even I was outraged."

Case No. 2. "On Wednesday 19th August 1942, my husband and brother-in-law were arrested. On Thursday two Indian soldiers came to my place at dusk. My ailing sister-in-law was in the house, my mother-in law having gone to give food to the prisoners. One soldier entered my room while the other stood outside. He laid hands on me and threatened me with death, if I shouted. I told him that I was a pregnant woman, but he would not listen. He then outraged me and went away. As soon as my mother-in-law returned I told her about the outrage. The same night I delivered a girl."

Case No. 3. "On Thursday, the 20th August 1942, two

soldiers came to my house. I was then in menses. I told about my state, but they could not believe it. They tried to drag me aside but I did not move. So they went away. After a time three soldiers came and searched for me. I hid in a neighbour's hay-stack. I hid there till Friday evening without food. But they persisted in coming. My hand is injured, because of their rough handling. But they did not molest me further. Since then I am ailing. (This woman later on confessed to Dr. Wazalwar that she was outraged by the soldiers, but that she did not like to reveal this truth to the pleader who wrote her application for her).

Case No. 4. "My husband, the Sar-Panch of the village was arrested on Wednesday the 19th August. There was no harassment at the time. But the next day, Thursday, four white soldiers and Prema Bhatia entered my house. They went round the whole house and broke mirrors and whatever things of glass they could find. Then they asked me to go upstairs, but I did not move. My two-mothers-in-law, my elder sister-in-law and an old woman were there. Still they came close to me, in the presence of all these elderly women, and tried to take liberty with me. One of them aimed his gun at me and threatened to kill me if I declined to go upstairs with them. I resolutely told them that I was a pregnant woman and that I would never yield to their desires. Then they went away.

"Then a local policeman in Mufti came and asked me how I escaped from the soldiers' hands. I got angry. But he threatened me and said that he would take me to Chanda, and if I did not yield, he would come in his uniform in the evening and bring about a dozen soldiers with him. He swore that he would outrage me.

"As soon as he left, Prema Bhatia came with four or five white soldiers and a couple of Indian soldiers. When I saw them at a distance, I hid behind my house. They then questioned my mother-in-law but she said that she did not know. The soldiers then took with them blankets, dresses and some linen from our house. I hid myself in Chambharpura.

"There also the soldiers would come and inquire : Show us the wife of the Sar-Panch. If you fail to surrender, we will burn your house.

"The whole night I stayed in a Chamar's house. At the dead of night two soldiers, one of them named Babulal, came and told everybody to get up. Then they looked at the faces of all the sleeping women with the help of a lamp.

"While this was going on I left the house by a back-door, and taking with me my daughter of four years and two neighbours, I left Chimur. We walked on without stopping,

without any food, and thus reached Berur, a village in the Nagpur district, in the evening.

"You have already made us helpless by taking away all our man-folk, many women have been outraged. I appeal to you to find out the culprits and punish them. In an identification parade, I will recognise four of the soldiers who tried to molest me."

The following cases were examined by Dr. Wazalwar :—

Case No 5. "She is a girl of 12 or 13 years age. She was dragged from her father's place in the night and taken to a deserted place on some pretext. She was outraged. But she ran away and so escaped the fate of being outraged by many soldiers who were waiting for her. Dr. Wazalwar examined her and pronounced it was a clear case of rape.

Case No. 6. A woman of 25 years was outraged by two soldiers when she had delivered only some days previously. She was almost dumb due to fear.

Case No. 7. A woman of 25 years, staying in Pahadpura, was outraged.

Case No. 8. A woman of 25 years, staying in Vadipura, was outraged.

Case No. 9. A girl of 15 years, staying in Chambharpura was caught by soldiers, but ran away and so escaped.

Case No. 10. A pregnant woman of eight months staying in Bharaipura stroked her abdomen.

Case No. 11. A girl of 15 years was outraged in a bye-lane.

Government Defence

We give below the full text of the C. P. Government communique dated October 16th 1942 :—

"The Provincial Government has received complaints of rape and looting alleged to have been committed by the Military and Police at Chimur in Chanda district where, it will be remembered two Magistrates, an Inspector of Police and a police constable were done to death by a mob on 15th August, 1942. The Chimur village was visited by Dr. Moonje and Mr. Ghatate on 26th September, 1942 and they stayed there from 10 a. m. to 5—30 p. m. Some of the complaints have been received from Dr. Moonje and others from ladies of Nagpur, who visited Chimur on 19th September, 1942, or through other channels. None of the complaints has been filed before a Magistrate and none of them has been attested on oath or by solemn affirmation.

The Provincial Government has considered these complaints very carefully. As the complaints have not been sworn to or attested, it has been not possible to examine the complaints in the usual way. The complaints relate to

incidents which are alleged to have taken place between the 19th and 27th of August, 1942 and apparently are confined to the period from 19th to 21st August, 1942. The first intimation of complaints of this nature was given in a resolution of the Bar Association, Chanda, dated 22nd August, 1942, which merely gave currency to rumours and gave no details of any kind. It was not until 22nd September that written complaints were received by the Chief Secretary. The complaints included two allegations of rape, one on 19th August, 1942, and one on a date unspecified which, however, seems to relate to the same period. These two allegations were against unknown police constables and in both cases it was alleged that the victims were nine months gone in pregnancy. Subsequently on the date of Dr. Moonje's visit to Chimur on 26th September, 1942, six complaints of rape were preferred of which two appear to be the incidents referred to above. These later complaints, however, include an allegation of rape by five white soldiers, but the complainant did not herself come forward to make the complaint which was preferred through a sister-in-law. Again, consequently, (on 1st October, 1942) two separate reports on Chimur were received from ladies of Nagpur who visited Chimur on 19th September, 1942. In one of these reports, it is alleged that after removing the men, the soldiers took complete possession of all the houses, looted everything they could lay their hands on and outraged women to their hearts' content. As the population of Chimur is about 5,000 while the number of arrests at that time was only 225, it is obvious that this statement is wildly exaggerated. This report mentions that four white soldiers attempted molestation on 19th August. Altogether, four reports have been received, all about four or five weeks after the alleged events; they are grossly discrepant in matters of detail and as regards the number of cases of rape and outrage complained of. The first important point to notice in connection with these complaints is that Mr. Subramanian, the Deputy Commissioner of Chanda, was present at Chimur, together with the District Superintendent of Police, throughout the period covered by these complaints, except that the Deputy Commissioner was away for about 27 hours on the 21st and 22nd August. Mr. Subramanian states that the women of the village had ample opportunities to make complaints to him from the very first day. From the morning of the 22nd August onwards the women of the village were allowed to bring food, both morning and evening, for the persons who had been arrested, and were lodged in a room next door to the room occupied by the Deputy Commissioner who, in

order to ensure that they did not receive inconsiderate treatment, made a point of being present while the prisoners were being fed by their women-folk. The Deputy Commissioner observes, "If the women had been required to go a long distance to lodge their complaints failure to do so could be understood, but failure to open their mouths when I was in their very midst cannot certainly be accounted for. And when the women of the village made no complaint to me day after day, meal after meal, I could naturally take it that everything was all right. Every day nearly 100 to 200 women, and later even more, used to come."

Secondly, on 21st August certain ladies complained to the Deputy Commissioner that some soldiers were trying to enter their houses, but they made no allegations of looting or molestation, still less of rape. To restore their confidence immediate steps were taken to prevent the occurrence of any such incidents. One of these women was subsequently prominent in making allegations of rape to Dr. Moonje in respect of the same period, 19th August.

Thirdly, the Commissioner, Mr. Rau, himself visited Chimur on the 6th September, 1942, and interviewed several non-officials, but not a single complaint was made to him. It was not until on or about 10th September, 1942, after a number of Chanda and Warora pleaders had taken up the matter, that written complaints were addressed to the Commissioner and, even then, these complaints included one only of rape.

As regards complaints of looting, the Deputy Commissioner reports that not a single complaint was made to him by the public at any time but on the occasion of Dr. Moonje's visit, about five weeks after the incidents referred to, the evidence of the havoc alleged to have been caused by the Military and police appeared. It consisted of rooms with some broken photographs, tumblers and gramophone records; a broken door, two or three wooden pillars slightly chipped; and some boxes from which property was said to have been stolen. The Deputy Commissioner pointed out that books, chains and staples were found invariably intact, and observed, with regard to a number of rooms in which books and articles were found strewn about, that it is very unlikely that people would have allowed their houses to remain in such an untidy mass for as long as a month. It may be mentioned that on 25th August, 1942, when a suspicious bundle was seized from a constable, he was dealt with immediately on the spot and dismissed from the service. The other cases came subsequently to the notice of the District Superintendent of Police and are now under investigation.

The Provincial Government has received an exhaustive report from the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Subramanian, together with the comments of the Commissioner, Mr. Rau. At Chimur, a Magistrate and a Naib Tehsildar, who were still at the rest house, a mile or so from the village and had not yet had an opportunity of visiting the village, were brutally done to death without any provocation whatever, and a Circle Inspector of Police together with a constable, resisting overwhelming odds, had also been brutally murdered. As the Deputy Commissioner points out, the force sent to Chimur was dealing with violent persons whose thirst for blood had not yet subsided and who were concealing themselves in groups of 8 or 10 behind locked doors. In such circumstances, a certain amount of damage to property and rough handling were inevitable. It is incredible that complaints of the nature now brought forward would not have been made to the Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner, both of whom are Indian officers, if they had really occurred. The Commissioner's conclusion is that it does not lie in the mouths of the complaints to bring forward these accusations now nearly five weeks after the events, that in the nature of things there can now be no proofs of the allegations as the women themselves have admitted that they are unable to identify their assailants and that, as the people concerned have postponed complaining they have only themselves to blame if the complaints are held to be "not proved".

On review of all the circumstances, and after securing the depositions of the British Officers who were in command of the small detachments of British troops, the Provincial Government is satisfied not only that the complaints are "not proved" but that there are strong reasons for supposing that the allegations have been put out in order to divert attention from the heinous crimes committed at Chimur. There are many inconsistencies and gross improbabilities in the allegations which have, moreover not been made on oath or solemn affirmation although there was every opportunity for doing so. The allegations are so belated as to be largely untrustworthy on this account alone. In particular, the Provincial Government has no hestiation in describing the accusations made against the British troops as highly improbable, incapable of proof, and contrary to the known facts regarding the others for their disposition and discipline at Chimur. The Provincial Government, therefore, decline to appoint a committee to enquire into charges which are properly cognisable by the Police and the Magistracy. To do so would be to invite vilification of the Police and Military in circumstances which would permit of no defence, since all the complaints

except one are against persons unknown so that there is no possibility of testing the truth of the allegations".

Dr. Moonje's Reply

"Having carefully read the unusually long communique of the C.P. Government, my impression is that the laboured arguments advanced by the Government to establish that the allegations of excesses against the Police and Military are not proved and that therefore there is no need to institute a Committee of Enquiry, are, to say the least, absolutely unconvincing, says Dr. B.S. Moonje, in a press statement. In view of the pressure of war conditions and the mass movement of civil disobedience, people can understand and appreciate the straight and frank statement, as issued by the Government of Bombay, that they will not tolerate the collection of evidence against the Government servants and the Military engaged in suppressing the movement. But when attempts are made by forced arguments to explain away alleged happenings as has been done by the Government of C. P. and Berar, it lands the Government in an awkward and untenable position. Say, for instance, the Government contention that "there are strong reasons for supposing that the allegations have been put out in order to divert attention from the heinous crimes committed at Chimur". Can this contention reasonably stand? More officials were killed at Ashti than at Chimur and Government buildings were burnt at Ramtek. Also large numbers of people, including the local leaders and other respectable persons were arrested at all these places. Then why was not this trick of falsely concocting foul and shameful allegations of rape and outraging modesty tried also at Ramtek and Ashti where particularly larger number of Government officials have been killed? Government say that these allegations "have not been made on oath or solemn affirmations". Was any opportunity afforded them for the purpose? It is exactly for this purpose that we are suggesting a Committee of Enquiry which unfortunately has been declined by the Government.

"While taking evidence and depositions, the Deputy Commissioner of Nagpur, Mr. Layard, and the Deputy Commissioner of Wardha and Chanda, and in the latter two places also the Commissioner of Nagpur division, were with us, and we sincerely believe that a 'Prima facie' case has been made out for the institution of a Judicial Committee of Enquiry. In view of the general atmosphere that was prevailing at the time at Chimur, we cannot hold the ladies and the women responsible or blame them for failing to make their

allegations in time, particularly when the men-folk in their household were arrested and locked up in the Government custody.

"The Government admits that the very first intimation of complaints in Chimur was given by the Bar Association of Chanda in its resolution dated 22nd August, that is, within 2 or 3 days of the happenings; but instead of congratulating the Bar Association on their vigilance and promptness, they have been curtly dismissed as circulating rumours, as the allegations of the women and the ladies have been dismissed as falsehoods. As a matter of fact, however, there are ladies whose husbands have been arrested but they have not made any complaints of molestations, while, on the other hand, there are women who have made such complaints, though none of their relations have been so far arrested.

"Under the circumstances how can the Government hope to convince the people of their innocence or want of responsibility in the matter?

In the end we publicly offer our grateful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for his kindness and courtesy in offering us an opportunity to do whatever little service we were able to do to our people at Ramtek, Ashti and Chimur".

Professor J. P. Bhansali M. A., (Aged 48 years) an inmate of the Sevagram Ashram and a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi, approached Mr. Aney at Delhi, on 1st November '42, requesting him to use his influence with the Government for appointing a committee to enquire specially into the complaints of the cases of "Rape" in Chimur and to see that such things are not repeated in future. When Mr. Aney did not accede to his request then he started a fast till his following demands were not fulfilled by Mr. Aney:—

1. That soldiers and Police should not be allowed to commit excesses hereafter.

2. The atrocities being committed in jails be stopped and those that occurred in the past should be investigated.

3. Excesses committed by the Police and the Military in the rural areas must be investigated.

4. If Mr. Aney is unable to get these reliefs for the public, he should resign.

He abstained from food and water and in the afternoon also imposed silence on himself. Thereafter at about 5.30 p.m. he was served with an order under D. I. R. issued by the Chief Commissioner, to leave the limits of Delhi within 3 hours. At 9.45 p.m. he along with his companion Mr. Balwant Singh was arrested. He contiuued his fast even in the jail. After 4 days forcible feeding there he was released on 6th

November, 1942. along with his companion and conveyed to C. P., under police escort.

On the 10th instant, in the company of a fellow-worker, he left for Chimur. He was still convalescing after the ordeal of fast and forcible feeding in the Delhi Jail. He walked 13 miles, did 17 miles on bullock-cart and completed the journey by train and bus. At Chimur he and his companion were promptly arrested and taken to the police station. But they were let off after their names and addresses were noted. They then took up residence in a local temple. The police intimidated the temple priest, who, however, permitted his unexpected guest to stay. Prof. Bhansali visited several residents of Chimur and made his own inquiries into the allegations. The result of his inquiries fully confirmed the reports made by Dr. Moonje and a party of influential ladies who had visited Chimur from Nagpur. Prof. Bhansali again went on a fast at Chimur from the 12th instant as the only way in which, under the extraordinary circumstances, he could identify himself with the sufferings of the people of Chimur. This created a great stir amongst the public of Chimur who felt for the first time that God had sent somebody to befriend them. On the 13th a notice was served on him by the District Magistrate of Chimur requiring him to leave Chimur within three hours. As he did not leave within three hours, he and his companion were put under arrest and conveyed to Wardha where they were released. Prof. Bhansali again started his fast on the 12th, taking neither food nor water. He was on a fast since the 12th and upto the 16th day of his fast he took water only four times. His condition became extremely weak.

Chimur is nearly 75 miles from Wardha. On the 19th, he again set out for Chimur on foot inspite of his great physical weakness, accompanied by two attendants. After negotiating a distance of 7 miles from Wardha, the party spent the night in the open under the shelter of trees. Early morning on the 20th, they set out again. Prof. Bhansali was as usual barefooted yet they reached Higanghat in the evening, which is nearly 30 miles from Wardha. They again set out and having done 31 miles reached a village called Amli on the road to Chimur. The last stage of 14 miles was travelled on the 22nd ; they reached Chimur at 3 p. m. Prof. Bhansali was in an extremely exhausted condition and took his abode in the temple where he had started his fast on the 12th. He again met a large crowd of people in the temple. On the 23rd he was again put under arrest and brought back to Wardha under Police escort. His condition was extremely weak, but he appeared to derive 'marvellous sustenance from

his will-power. To be able to walk nearly 75 miles, after having fasted for 10 days, taking neither food nor water was a miracle of physical and mental endurance. He developed pain in the joints and certain other expected symptoms of starvation and fatigue.

On the 25th he again set out for Chimur on foot accompained by attendants to give every form of assistance and also to compel him to use a bullock-cart if he should show any signs of collapse. This was his 3rd trip to Chimur.

The following statement was issued to the public by Prof. Bhansali himself on reasons for his fast and his determination to sacrifice his life in order to secure redress for the outrages committed by the British and Indian Troops in Chimur :—

"No man likes to depart from this world easily. I had taken a vow to spin for at least fourteen hours a day till I lived. But it was with a pang that I had to abandon the spinning vow in the face of the conflagration raging around me. I could not for the life of me, harbour the peaceful idea of spinning away my time when my dear village sisters were raped by British and Indian soldiers who looted and plundered their wealth and corn leaving nothing for them to eat, taking away their clothing leaving very little for them to dress with. I have seen old men at Chimur weeping before me destitute as they were. I have seen aged women with tearful eyes weeping before me at the atrocities of the British Government. I have seen children of Chimur looking still dazed at the things that had happened there. God only knows the intensity of feeling and the helplessness of these mortals. A Deputy Superintendent of Police himself admitted before me that there might have happened a rape here or a rape there and that there was general beating of the people in the beginning to impress upon their mind the might of the Imperial Government. Looking at all these dreadful and painful circumstances I cannot help feeling that life is not worth living if these things cannot be remedied.

"I demanded of the D.C. an independent and impartial investigation. My letter has been unheeded. I wrote to Mr. Aney of the Imperial Government my intention to fast till death but no reply has been vouchsafed to me.

"The course of my conduct is clear. The English who complain of the Japanese and German barbarities are to my mind more barbaric than the heathens of old. The honour of India is at stake and I have decided to defend it by sacrificing my life and to leave this mortal body of mine as a protest against the barbarism practised by the Btitish Government in the name of law and order.

"My last prayer to God is : May He open the eyes of the

Government to the dire distress and havoc they are causing to a helpless nation. May He give them wisdom to understand that as you do unto others you would be done by. But my innermost prayer to God is : Forgive them for they know not what they do."

The third trip of Prof. Bhansali to Chimur was again cut short by the local police and he was brought back to Sevagram on a stretcher. He was then served with an order by the Deputy Commissioner of Wardha forbidding him from leaving Sevagram and settling down in Wardha where he was since allowed to remain in peace. After making three trips on foot to Chimur under these conditions, it was physically impossible even for his endurance to undertake any more walking. His condition was causing anxiety to doctors and he himself appeared to be feeling the near approach to collapse.

Doctors expected him to lose consciousness at any moment. Luckily he was taking water which, it was hoped, would sustain him for sometime longer. He was being looked after by a band of devoted fellow-workers and inquiries after his health were pouring in from far and near. Amongst the kind inquiries was one from Mr. M. S. Aney, who had also appealed to Prof. Bhansali to abandon his fast and had assured him that he was doing what he deemed proper and possible. But there being nothing definite or tangible in Mr. Aney's request, Prof. Bhansali replied asking to be left in the hands of God and requesting Mr. Aney to go to Chimur personally and console the sufferers. Among those who were looking after Prof. Bhansali was Shrimati Janki Devi Bajaj.

Second statement by Professor Bhansali is given below :—

"I am religious minded by temperament. I am only interested in a life inspired by religion. That is why I serve Daridra Narayan, and spin as my daily ritual. I have been shocked by the repressive policy adopted in the country for the last three months and a half and by what I heard and read of it as applied to Ashti and Chimur. I spent many sleepless nights on this account and as already stated in my Nagpur statement, I was exercised on the point whether it was even moral to take water under the rule of such a Government.

"At this time I heard what Dr. Moonje and some sisters from Nagpur had to say about the molestation of women in Chimur. I also read the Government communique about it. Government did not venture to deny the facts though they tried to defend themselves in dubious ways. There is no other instance that I know of in the history of India when such atrocities were committed by letting loose soldiers on

women. Indian may have lost its political freedom, but has never suffered dishonour of its women. Even our enemies have recorded how hundreds of our women preserved their purity by immolating themselves in fire. My religious and and moral sense was shocked at what happened at Chimur. It appeared to me to be my plain duty to lay down my life for such a cause. It would not be an exaggeration to say that I grew mad on the point. Many already think me to be mad. But I am surprised why people do not go mad about freedom and the honour of their womenfolk.

"I have known Shri Aney for many years. I knew that he had faith in Indian culture and religion. I therefore decided to go to him at New Delhi, acquaint him with the situation and get him to secure an independent inquiry. Chimur being near his village Vani, he is connected with the people of Chimur. I also thought that it was possible for both of us to go there and see the situation for ourselves. But Shri Aney had no intention of doing anything. On the contrary, he said that such incidents are common near cantonments. I was surprised to hear it. I felt that would be a travesty of our manliness if we submit to such things without resistance. I told him that if he could not do anything he should at least resign and if he did not do so, I would lay down my life at his feet. This was at 10 a. m. on 1st November. Shri Aney had already decided what to do with me. He pointed out a room to me and left. Then I began my fast.

"In the afternoon I received an order to leave Delhi. I was arrested at 9-30 p. m. From after the 4th, I was forcibly fed by the nose. On the 6th I was taken from Jail, brought to Sevagram on the 7th and set free.

"As previously decided I gave up my fast and decided to go to Chimur myself. Though weak I started on the 10th and reached there on the 11th. I started my fast again in the temple of Balaji. I then begged of the Deputy Commissioner to set up an impartial inquiry. In all humility I told him that if nothing was done in this matter, my fast would continue. Here also the farce of Delhi was repeated. I was served with an order to leave Chimur within 3 hours; then I was arrested, brought to Sevagram on the 13th and set free.

"I continued my fast and decided to go back to Chimur. I wanted to die at Chimur or on my way to it. I started on foot on the 19th from Sevagram and reached Chimur on the 22nd. My fast remained unbroken. Being weak I took 56 hours to do 60 or 62 miles on foot. But I met many people on the way. I also met police officers. They brought me back on a stretcher in train by second class. The Deputy Superintendent of Police confessed to me that rape might

have been committed here or there in Chimur. He pressed me to take water. He also realised the importance of my act and its back-ground.

"To-day on the 26th morning inspite of my fast without water, I am starting again for Chimur. I am starting from Sevagram and Bapu's hut which not only to me but to many others has been a shrine but now Chimur is the only shrine for me. I am making this last pilgrimage on foot and with fast. That is my consolation. My humble prayer to the Almighty is that no woman should suffer dishonour in this sacred land of ours, even if many others like me have to lay down their lives in that cause.

"This war is being conducted in the name of Peace and Freedom. The question of Indian freedom has great bearing on this grim war in which human life is being sacrificed, in the interest of humanity, Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent method has a greater bearing on Indian freedom. That way alone will the values of the world be altered. Real peace and a just society are not possible without it. This movement is a step in that direction, and Chimur incidents are a part of it. From this point of view, I am happy that I will die in the interest of humanity and in the cause of non-violence.

"Men who do not shrink from sending men to gallows felt sorry that a man like me should die of free will. This is not the strength of the individual but of non-violence. When the world realises its potency such atrocities will disappear."

Unmoved by the agitation caused by the revelations of Chimur and Prof. Bhansali's soul-stirring protest, the British Government in India was none the less perturbed and guilt-conscious. It has decided to suppress the agitation for redress. The Government passed orders bannig the publication of any news either of Chimur or of Professor Bhansali.

But ultimately at the intervention of Dr. Khare, the C. P. Government took the decision, which enabled Prof. Bhansali to break his fast. The Government communique on this subject is reproduced in full below :—

Nagpur, January 12, 1943.

"Owing to the mediation of Dr. N. B. Khare, the tangle between the Government and the Press has been solved, and the C.P. Government have withdrawn the order of December 12, prohibiting the publication of news about Prof. Bhansali of Sewagram Ashram and his fast. The announcement was made by Mr. T. C. S. Jayaratnam, Chief Secretary, at an emergent Press conference held today. This was subject to the Bombay agreement and he hopped that nothing would be done to destroy the confidence that was established."

Mr. M. D. Shahane, Publicity Officer, made the following statement at the Press conference :—

"Government welcome the efforts which have been made to bring about a solution of the difficulties arising from the Chimur incident there was no intention of attributing any ulterior motive to the women of Chimur generally Government attach and have always attached the great importance to the maintenance of discipline among the military and police engaged in the restoration of order, and consider that respect for the honour of women and their protection from molestation are and shall be a first essential of good discipline"

The following is the letter of Dr. Khare to Prof. Bhansali :—

"Dear Mr. Bhansali—I saw you on January 8th and had a talk with you. I had as a result a full and free discussion with His Excellency about the Chimur incidents. As regards the complaints as to outrages committed on women of Chimur the demand for a public inquiry may not be pursued in view of the difficulty attending identification after the lapse of time. I am in a position to assure you that the C. P. Government will issue a communique to the effect that there was no intention on the part of Government to attribute any ulterior motive to the women of Chimur generally and that the Government attached and have always attached the greatest importance to the maintenance of discipline among the military and police engaged in the restoration of order, and consider that respect for the honour of women and their protection from molestation is and shall be a first essential of good discipline. The ban on the press relating to the Chimur and Bhansali affairs will be removed. The communique or the Press Note, etc., would simultaneously appear in the Press with the letters.

"I understand that there are no restrictions on visitors to Chimur now, but if there are any they will be removed. I am in a position to assure you that the Hon. Mr. Aney will join you in your visit to Chimur and meet the people, and Government will not place any restrictions on it. If you so desire I will have no objection to go with you. Yours has been a tremendous sacrifice, but in view of the above I would request you to break your heroic fast."

The following is the reply of Prof. Bhansali :—

"Dear Dr. Khare—Many thanks for your letter and your effort. I am glad to find that Government are willing to issue a communique as suggested by you and remove the ban on the Press as regards Chimur news and the restrictions on its visitors. I am also glad that Shri Aney will be kind enough to come with me to Chimur and meet the people of the

village thus conceding my request to him. As devoted to religous life, I have always felt that molestation of even a single woman is a crime not only against society but against God. Now it has been given to me to communicate the feeling to others, may be in a very small measure, I am therefore beholden to God that He has made me the instrument of awakening conscience on so vital a question as the honour of women.

"When I recover my strength I shall be glad to visit Chimur in the company of Shri Aney and yourself. In view of the reasons given by you, I agree to drop the demand for an inquiry in Chimur and to break my fast. After I break my fast no restrictions will be placed on my movements or utterances which may be directed to the relief of Chimur or which relate to my fast."

Dr. N. B. Khare issued the following statement :—

"I am glad to state that I have been successful in bringing about a happy termination of the episode which has been agitating the country for the last so many days. I mean Prof. Bhansali's fast. It is well known that I would have been the last man to take any interest in anything connected with Wardha, but after a great deal of persuasion of friends I proceeded to Wardha on Friday, January 8th and examined Mr. Bhansali and held discussions with him and his close associates. After returning from Wardha, Messrs. Munshi and Walunjkar came to me and held discussions at my place in the presence of my friends, and after having number of interviews with His Excellency the Governor the released formula was agreed upon, and thus the oft-quoted saying 'all is well that ends well' has been amply justified.

"I take this opportunity of publicly thanking Mr. Anusuyabai Kale for persuading me to take interest in this affair, Messrs. Munshi and Walunjkar and the Bajajes for their affording me all facilities and Mr. Bhansali for acceding to my request, and last but not the least to His Excellency the Governor for his helpful attitude throughout."

But actually it was after 64 days fast that Professor Bhansali achieved the moral success in the Ashti and Chimur affair. But it actually did not change the course of the Government. The Police and the Military escaped untried and unpunished whereas the people were further penalised with vengeance. 107 persons were prosecuted and stood their trial under 9 counts of murder, dacoity and rescuing arrested persons etc., with the following result :—

WARDHA, December 5, 1942.

Mr. Justice Deo, Special Judge for the Ashti Police Murder Case, convicted 10 of the accused to death by hanging, 55 to transportation for life, and 9 to terms of rigorous imprisonment varying from two to five years.

Thirty-three persons were acquitted.

Sixty-five witnesses were examined by the prosecution and 25 by the defence in this case.

Out of the 55 persons sentenced to transportation for life, fourteen were recommended by the Special Judge for mercy.

Out of the 33 accused acquitted eighteen were arrested in Jail, the very day in connection with arson committed on August 16th, 1942.

Somehow Professor Bhansali's life was saved and thereafter Mr. Aney also undertook to visit Chimur. On July 21, 1942, Professor Bhansali along with Shrimati Janki Devi Bajaj, left for Chimur, where he devoted his attention to improve the sanitation and also started a class to teach spinning. Mr. M. S. Aney, The Government of India's Representative in Ceylon, left for Chimur on July 26th, 1943, to see Prof. Bhansali and others to fulfil a promise made in January. Now the facts of Chimur are well-known and they form an important and darkest chapter of the history of the British atrocities in India.

This tragic story of our helplessness and shame shall echo and re-echo in the following words of Prof. Bhansali which formed his message at the time of his arrest at Delhi, in November, 1942 :—

"No nation can achieve freedom which suffers outrages on its women and receives them lying down. We must be up and fight against a Government intoxicated with the lust of power. God gives the utmost to those who fight for their honour".

INNOCENT MURDERS

We quote below in full the speech of Mr. G. V. Deshmukh (Nagpur) delivered in the Central Assembly in support of Mr. Neogy's resolution :—

"Sir, the use of force can only be justified when those who wish to establish order have to deal with a riotous assembly, and the use of firearms can only be justified when those who wish to establish order and preserve peace are in such a position that their lives are in danger. If none of these conditions can be satisfied, then resort to arms cannot be justified. There are certainly cases which have occurred and I am going to cite them and they can only be designated as cases of murder.

"Now, I am going to cite some instances. In Nagpur, for instance, milkmen coming from the suburbs in the early hours of the morning were shot at by the military men. Mind you, the suburban people are not expected to know any curfew order or any other orders that were promulgated. Not only was this curfew order which was issued in Nagpur not made known to these suburban people who brought milk and vegetables but even Government servants were not aware of it. I can cite the instance of a person who was connected with the Agricultural Department of the Government. He was connected with the breeding branch of the Agricultural Department. His boss was coming to Nagpur and he wanted to receive him at the station. The Scheduled time of the arrival of the train was 5. O'clock but that day it was late. So, I told him that there was a rumour that a curfew order was going to be issued. He said, 'Is it so ?' I told him it was so. I was sitting at the house of a person who is a very responsible person; he is doctor and he was a member of this Assembly, I mean Dr. Khare...So the gentleman who wanted to go the station to receive his boss got himself in touch with the police. The reply he got from the police station was that they did not know but they promised to make enquiries and then let him know. The fellow waited for half an hour and got no reply. So, even the police did not know the promulgation of this curfew order. When even the educated people did not know anything about this curfew order, how can you expect the milkmen, and the vegetable vendors to know about it ? These milkmen come to Nagpur to sell their milk; they ride on their cycles and their cans are filled with milk. There was no earthly reason for shooting a man who was riding on a bicycle and carrying his milk cans. The next thing that I wish to say is this. The soldiers whether Indian or European, who were employed to establish order or the officers who commanded them, did not care tuppence for the lives of Indians. When the disturbances occurred, I went to the city and there was firing going on. When the military came, there was no mob round-about those places and yet they started firing at random. I saw men coming in Dr. Paranjoye's hospital who were shot on all parts of their body. Among them were persons who were living in their houses and who were doing business in their shops. What earthly justification was there for using firearms against them ? Not only that, even after the order was established, respectable persons were brought out of their houses to remove the refuse in the streets. So, it was not a solitary instance. I can say that this happened to the retired Government Sub-Assistant Surgeons. The unfortunate part of it is that these people who

suffered at the hands of the military will tell you in private all that happened to them but not in the public. Their idea is that they would go down in the estimation of the people. If their is a regular inquiry, they can come forward and speak the truth. There was a member of the Bar, who was treated in a very disrespectful fashion. The peons of Judges and other respectable persons were shot at. I know the case of a person who is now on the Bench and whose peon was shot at when he was returning from the Bank. When he wrote to the military authorities about the matter, they did not pay any attention to it. When cases like this do occur, they certainly impress the public and people begin to ask, as a friend of mine did ask, whether there is British Raj or Goonda Raj. These things are unjustifiable. Even Indian ladies have suffered at the hands of the military. Of course, they are not prepared to mention their names because their self-respect is involved.

"Now Sir, after narrating these incidents that happened at Nagpur, let me come to Chimur. Things became so serious at Chimur that they have occupied the attention not only of the public here but also in England and other countries. This is a place which had made itself known. I have a Government communique in my hand. From this very communique I will point out that there are grounds for inquiry. What happened was this. There were disturbances on the 16th and the District Magistrate went there on the 19th. He took with him 200 British soldiers, 50 Indian soldiers and 50 men belonging to the reserved police force. They went there and what did they do? They started breaking open the houses and arresting men and the following night the women were molested. Force was used, the houses were broken open and the people were terrified. I can establish this from the statement which was issued in justification of it by the Central Provinces Government itself. This is what the communique says:

"As the Deputy Commissioner points out, the force sent to Chimur was dealing with violent persons whose thirst for blood had not yet subsided and who were concealing themselves in groups of 8 or 10 behind locked doors. In such circumstances, a certain amount of damage to property and rough handling were inevitable."

"The fact is clear. The comment which I wish to make is this. How could these blood-thirsty men behind the locked doors confine themselves in the houses in batches? If they were blood-thirsty men, they would be out to take somebody's blood. The Government says that damage to property and rough handling were inevitable. You have to prove that

these things were inevitable. If you are not going to accept the statements which some of the ladies made and among them was included the wife of the Ex-Governor of the Central Provinces and Berar and many of them were graduates, what earthly reason is there for us to accept your statement ?

"Then Sir, besides the allegations relating to Chimur incident there are other cases of molestation of women. What had the Government done ? What is it that the Government says ? It says we are not going to do anything. The reason is that names of women are not disclosed. Nobody comes forward to give out the names of persons. We cannot convict persons unless their names are known. It is no use to have an enquiry. What Government forgets and what we are claiming is this, that allegations against military and police are made by responsible persons. Government wish to disbelieve the attacks c military merely by saying that no name was given. They say the complaints of women are false. We say that there have been these acts, it is for you to prove that these are false. Hold an inquiry and prove the falsity of these, if you do not, then I feel justified in saying that these complaints are true and that the allegations that we have made are correct. Sir, I want to say one thing in justification of my proposition and that is this. You can not disbelieve a statement simply because no names are disclosed. For instance, this National War Front issued a leaflet called "Hounded Eyes" that gives an extract from a newspaper called the "Leader" of Allahabad. It contained an article or an extract of article which said that some person whose name is not given, interviewed a person, whose name is not given, and complained that his wife was raped by a Japanese soldier. The woman's name is not given. This interview took place after many months of Japanese attack on Burma. I am prepared to believe it—this statement that a Japanese may have raped this woman. Why should anybody blame us for out giving out names of women. Even in this article the names of persons are not mentioned. In the leaflet which has been issued by the National War Front no names are mentioned. They are carrying this Propaganda. They want the people to believe this statement. Having regard to the circumstances and certain customs of the society if at this stage no names of ladies are given we cannot say that these allegations are false."

Even at this the thirst of blood-thirsty British lion was not quenched but it rather increased. Thereafter followed prosecutions and convictions with the tyranny of the police and persecutions in the prisons. The Military and the Police got immunity from any sort of enquiry even into their deeds

and the question of their punishment never arose. The police and the Military were given the assurances through the Government communique beforehand. Thereafter when a demand for enquiry was made through a resolution by Mr. K. C. Neogy, in the Central Assembly, it was refused point blank and no heed was paid to such a demand and to all what was said there.

Several cases were started against a number of persons for the happenings in Ashti, Chimur and Betul. Besides long term sentences to hundreds of the people, 25 were sentenced to death. The Police cases, under ordinary circumstances, were seldom true and supported by the genuine evidence and in such disturbed times when there was no regard for any sense of proportion or justice who cared for anything! The cases were freely forged and fabricated. Many absolutely innocent persons were arrested and prosecuted and subsequently some were left by the police after rich gratification and some even declared innocent by the Courts after long trials. It was definitely mentioned in a judgment that the "act was of also others not implicated". Thus innocent were persecuted and prosecuted and the guilty even in the eyes of Law escaped punishment. Such was the administration of justice! We quote below an extract from a judgment of the Session Judge :—

"I hold that conspiracy has not been proved and also that this act is not the work of those three convicted, but also of others who have not been implicated in this case, as this is not the result of a sporadic action, but of some planning." The Session Judge Wardha, observed while acquitting Bhau Panse, Hansraj and Maroti Joge, and convicting Vallabhbhai, a trustee of the Gramsewa Mandal, to two years' imprisonment and Dhebyabhai and Eswarsingh to three years, in the Paunar Conspiracy case.

The wanton and indiscriminate actions of police-brutalities and repression lasted not only during the disturbed times but even much after. So late as Oct. 1943, also saw a police raid on Khadi Bhandar in which they took away cash and food grains also. We quote below a news from Jubbulpore dated 20th Oct. '43:—

"As the result of the simultaneous raids and searches made by the C. P. police of the headquarters and the various branches of the Bhandar situated at Mul, Barmagar and Jubbulpore, the police, not only seized and removed the old and the current account books, the letters and the voucher copies, but also seized the cash which was found at these places at the time the searches were made.

"In addition to all these articles seized, the police also

removed the bags of grains which were stored by the inmates of the Bhandar at Saoli for distributing the same to the weavers and spinners who are in the employ of the Bhandar. The causes which prompted the police to make these searches are still shrouded in mystery."

Central Province, the adopted home and head quarter of Gandhiji, should have undergone terrible sufferings and so it did. It was in C. P., that the worst sort of repression and savagery were done not only on men but even women were not spared. How the modesty of women was violated and how the British soldiers raped them will remain a blackest blot on the British rule in India which Indians can ill-afford to forget.

BENGAL

We begin the account of Bengal with the following extract from the letter of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee to the Governor of Bengal dated 16th November '42:

"For the first time since the Reforms 1919, Bengal had a ministry enjoying the support of large sections of Hindus and Moslems. Parties and persons who were violently opposed to each other on political and communal considerations had agreed to stand on a comman platform for the good of the people specially during the period of war. There are certain people occupying high positions in this country and also abroad, who for obvious reasons do not like a strong combination of Hindu and Moslem elements. The co-operation offered by us was not responded to by you and certain section of the permanent officials. I regret to say that from the very beginning of our association with you, you have failed to rise to that impartial height of a provincial Governor, which could have given you courage and foresight to respect the Constitution, establish new conventions, and broaden the base of the provincial administration so as to win the affection and confidence of the people. You have all along permitted yourself to be guided by a section of permanent officials,—loyal die-hards, according to you; short-sighted and reactionary, according to us; resulting in the establishment of a government within a government which has proved disastrous to the interests of the province.

"I shall not go into details. But let me remind you that you showed no sympathy whenever proposals for the recognition of the people's right in various fields of activity were made. They were turned down by you because of deep-rooted distrust and suspicion. Our proposal for raising a Bengal Army was not acceptable to you for reasons which would not even bear scrutiny. This

alone would have revolutionised public opinion in Bengal. The scheme for popularising the Home Guard was rejected by you in spite of unanimous advise of all the Ministers, simply because you and your officials were afraid of trusting the people. You have systematically resisted the appointment of Parliamentary Secretaries and the expansion of Cabinet, just to embarrass the Ministry. Even before the Congress started any movement, you declined to give back to thousands of Bengalees their freedom which had been denied to them on suspicion or for participation in political movements, although we were prepared to take full responsiblity for their future behaviour and activities consistent with the war-situation. Recommendations for individual releases or even for temporary relaxation were turned down by you, utterly oblivious of any assurance given by us. In matters relating to the denial policy you failed to realise the untold suffering into which thousands of people would be thrown and the discontent that was bound to follow, and only after a good deal of efforts could that policy be only slightly modified. We do not yet know what plans have been kept ready for destruction of plants, machinery and other properties in case of enemy invasion. Even in matters relating to supply of food and control of supplies you have interfered with ministerial action and have rendered our task extremely embarrassing. You have discouraged the growth of collective responsibility among Ministers while taking momentous decisions on vital issues. Ministerial advice has been brushed aside in regard to selection and posting of officers, while your unabashed softness for the present Opposition Party is in marked contrast to the treatment we used to receive in a similar capacity when the last Ministry was in office. Even with regard to a simple question like prorogation of the last session of the Assembly, you have declined to accept our advice. Indeed I did not even receive a reply from you to my letter written early in October, pointing out how the Province had to incur wasteful and avoidable expenditure due to your decision not to prorogue the Assembly, simply to harass the Ministry. In matters affecting the rights and liberties of the people you have constituted yourself into an appellate authority, and you claim to act in exercise of your special powers under the Government of India Act. I have repeatedly told you that this is an absurd situation. During the war you can function with success only if you regard yourself as primarily responsible to the people of this province and act on the advice of their chosen representatives. But you have regarded yourself as one who is beyond anybody's control,

enjoying powers without being required to give account to any other authority. You have expressed your annoyance from time to time that Ministers are not more active in rousing public opinion in respect of matters relating to war or the general political situation. You will not allow Ministers to function and administer according to their own light and judgment. You and some of your officers will commit Government to policies and acts which Ministers do not approve of; and afterwards you expect them to stand up as obedient persons, fully justifying the results of your mistaken policy. The brunt of the attack falls on Ministers. The Legislature is even procluded from criticising or commenting on your conduct. You in your turn do not hesitate to take advantage of, and sometimes, even go beyond the spirit of, the provisions of the Government of India Act and the Instrument of Instructions, thus reducing ministerial administration to a mockery.

"But the most difficult situation has been created with regard to the manner of suppression of the political movement. I have told you repeatedly that, while it is the duty of any Government to see that acts of lawlessness are not committed or that disturbances are not created specially during this grave emergency, Government must not in any manner provoke a crisis or encourage or make it possible for officers to commit excesses or to inflict injury on innocent people. Where persons deliberately commit offences, they must face the consequences of the law. But in spite of our best efforts, indiscriminate arrests have been made, innocent persons assulted and shot down, and oppression has been carried on in some parts in a manner hardly creditable to any civilized Government. The fact that some British prisoners of war under German control were put under fetters roused the loud and angry protests of the British Government and its supporters. Can you not expresss even a fraction of that moral indignation for similar and even worse outrage committed on Indians by the agents of the British Government itself? You have persistently refused to have allegations enquired into and have also helped in the suppression of publication of accurate news.

"The Congress movement in Midnapore took a very serious turn, and none can say anything in respect of any legitimate measures taken to deal with the persons guilty of serious offences against law. But in Midnapore repression has been carried on in a manner which resembles the activities of Germans in occupied territories as advertised by the British agencies. Hundreds of houses have been

burnt down by the police and the armed forces. Reports of outrages on women have reached us. Moslems have been instigated to loot and plunder Hindu houses; or the protectors of law and order have themselves carried on similar operations. Orders were issued from Calcutta that it was not the policy of Government that house should be burnt down by persons in charge of law and order. I have ample evidence to show that this order was not carried into effect, and even after the unprecedented havoc caused by the cyclone on the 16th October and our visit to the affected areas a fortnight later, the burning of houses and looting were continued in some parts of the district. Apart from the manner in which people were fired and killed, these acts of outrages committed by Government agencies are abominable in character. Let us condemn by all means acts of lawlessness perpetrated by volunteers. To my knowledge they did not take the life of any Government servant. In any case the wrongs perpetrated by breakers of law and order are no justification whatsoever for the upholders of law and order to terrorise innocent people and to oppress one and all in a ruthless manner.

"The reports which I have received about the callousness and indifference of some of the officers even after the cyclone perhaps find no parallel in the annals of civilized administration. The suppression of news of the havoc by Government, and even of appeals of help, for more than a fortnight was criminal. In the presence of the District Magistrate complaints were received that boats were not made available on that fateful evening or even later to save lives of the people who were perilously resting for a brief while on the roofs of their houses that ultimately collapsed. One gentleman gave a harrowing description of the manner in which he and others begged of officers to allow a rescue for some men, women and children lying near the area concerned. This request was summarily rejected, and the men who had used the boat were threatened with dire consequences. Later on, all the people whom this party wanted to rescue were washed away, never to be found again. After the cyclone curfew orders are continuing even in areas where people offered every co-operation. Our intervention in this respect proved fruitless. Transport facilities and movements were extremely restricted even when we visited the district a fortnight later. Cows were requisitioned under the Defence of India Rules. The total destruction of cattle owing to flood and storm would be somewhere between 75 and 85 per cent. Of the cows that remained, although they were giving milk and some were with calf, a

good many were snatched away from private houses by the police and the military for the purpose of feeding the army. Such inhuman callousness is indeed unparalleled. One officer's report in writing to Government was that relief, whether organised by Government or any private agency, should be withheld for a month and thereby people taught a permanent lesson. Relief measures adopted by the local officers were utterly inadequate. Even bonafide private relief workers from Calcutta, though they produced their credentials, found themselves in jail under the Defence of India Rules. There is no chance on our part to get these officers removed from their area because prestige will then suffer. There is no chance of any enquiries being held, although other Provincial Governments have held enquiries, under far less serious circumstances, for then again prestige will suffer. The only chance that people of this province apparently have is to suffer patiently at the hands of the upholders of law and order and wait for the day when nemesis is bound to come.

"We have been told that there are indications that political agitation is still in progress in some parts of Midnapore. There may have been sporadic outbursts, but from my personal knowledge I can definitely assert that the bulk of the people, including supporters of the Congress, genuinely want peace to be restored immediately. From my talks with many inside and outside the Midnapore Jail I am satisfied that, if officers dealt with the situation with tact and sympathy, subversive activities would completely stop and the whole of Midnapore would rise to a man to work whole-heartedly with Government for giving relief. It is disgusting how valuable time has been wasted for one month because of the pathetic and dilatory attitude of some of the local officers on the one hand, and the strange obstructiveness of some of the representatives of the department of law and order in Calcutta, on the other hand. Meanwhile thousands are suffering for want of food, shelter, medicine, clothings and drinking water. The present methods of persecution and slow action are both cruel and fatal, and they will not die out nor the atmosphere improve until some officers are transferred from the district. Ministers feel that both for the correct maintenance of law and order and for the suffering humanity this should be done immediately, but they are powerless to give effect to it. You too declined to accept our advice in this respect. Could you not as Governor issue in time a public message of sympathy—the Viceroy could do it—for the unprecedented loss following the flood and cyclone, costing the lives of at least thirty thousand people and colossal destruction of cattle

and property, a havoc which British troops describe as similar to the worst ravages that may be caused by enemy bombing? Let an impartial enquiry be conducted into the affairs of Midnapore and the correct version on both sides see the light of the day. Will you have the courage to agree to this?

"The manner in which collective fines have been imposed by Government throughout the province deserves severe condemnation. The scheme of imposition of collective fines on Hindus alone, irrespective of their guilt, has been an all-India feature and is a British revival of the ancient policy of Jazia for which Aurangzeb made himself famous. In Bengal the Chief Minister had been averse to the imposition of such fines and tried again and again to lay down certain principles which were unimpeachable from the point of view of elementary Justice. You have interfered with the Chief Minister's decision and have prevented him from giving effect to these directions. Amounts have been imposed in many cases without any regard to the total damage caused or to the part played by the inhabitants concerned. In at least one case I know the collector was not even consulted; in some others local officers were invited by Government itself to propose the imposition of fines. I have carefully examined the papers with regard to a number of these cases, and the monstrosity of the imposition has staggered me. I challenge you to place the materials on which decisions have been taken before any impartial judge, and I have not the least doubt that in most cases the verdict will be that the fines are not at all leviable in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance, or that the discrimination made is completely unjustifiable or that the amounts fixed are entirely disproportionate in character. Fines have been imposed in many cases without the Chief Minister knowing what was being done. Only recently it was suggested by the Chief Minister that the realisation might be delayed by a fortnight and the entire policy considered at a Cabinet meeting. Your answer to this request which was made on behalf of all of us, was in full conformity with the traditions which you had already established. You had no objection to a Cabinet meeting being held. But you indicated beforehand with sufficient clearness, but with unbecoming impropriety and discourtesy to ministers, that you would in any case pass orders in exercise of your individual judgment for the immediate collection of the fines.

"It is amazing how in every matter concerning the rights and liberties of the people or where racial considerations were likely to arise, you have acted with singular indifference to the genuine interests of the people of this province. A

difficult and tense situation, such as the present, might have been ceased by a policy of administration actuated by sympathy, understanding and good-will. Irresponsible possession of powers by persons without a high degree of administrative ability, ignorant of Indian mind and conditions and blindly guided by unsympathetic bureaucrats, leads to disastrous consequences during the period of war. If ever a time comes when an impartial stock is taken of what you and others did and omitted to do, the verdict will be that at a critical hour you hopelessly failed to serve a province of great strategic importance, although, if correctly approached, its people were capable of being roused to an intense patriotic fervour and would have readily agreed to face any sacrifice and suffering for saving their own country from the impending invasion of the enemy. What you and others have done has only helped the enemy who cares not for our future. Whatever happens, it is we, the people of the land, who will suffer as much at the hands of our so-called protectors as of the avowed destroyers. Military matters are kept dead secret from us. We still hope Bengal and India will be successfully defended. But if the worst happens, you and others, who now feel overpowered by special responsibilites, will, like your friends similarly situated in Burma, desert the province, we remaining here, unarmed, unprepared and emasculated, to face your parting bullets and the yet unknown operations of the denial policy on the one hand; and the oppression of the invading enemy, on the other. And yet with good-will and statesmanship on your side to which the great bulk of Indians would have warmly responded, what a bulwark a free India and Allied Nations would jointly have been against the combined forces of the Axis Powers."

Midnapore ; This district in Bengal was one of the worst sufferers at the hands of the Government in August 1942. The account of the Officials' brutal behaviour is given below as described in a report by some eye-witnesses :—

Independence Movement and Cyclone in Contai Sub-division in Midnapore

About 150 arrests were made since August 14th, 1942. 32 were killed and 140 injured in Khasmahal as result of Official and Police firing at 8 places in 8 different days. About 700 houses were looted and burnt causing a loss of more than 2 lakhs of rupees.

The District Authorities adopted unprecedented repressive measures throughout the Sub-division. Practically speaking, the people of the Sub-division were subjected to

military rule. But the fun was that the military was doing no harm save in certain places, while the Civil Authorities of the District were committing as much excess as they could.

The Contai-Belda District Board Road—the only road from outside to Contai—was placed under military control from the 28th September '42 ; one whole day and night military cars patrolled the road. The Sub-Divisional Magistrate warned the people that any person suspected of attempting to damage the road, telegraph line or Ferry Ghat at Satmail or elsewhere will be at once shot at.

The S. D. O. also promulgated orders under Rule 93 of the India Defence Rules read with Notification No. 9478-P, dated 11-12-41, that no person except Government Officers, District Board employees, Ijaradars at Ferry Ghats and M. B. Doctors, should remain outside their house from 8 p. m. to 4 a. m. all over the Sub-Division. He also prohibited assembly of more than 4 persons at one place, carrying of lathi, iron materials etc. with them, and blowing of conch-shells except on occasions of religious festivals all over the Sub-division.

The District Magistrate took over all the Buses of the Contai Bus-Syndicate as well as Kalinagar and Ramnager Bus Associations; consequently the Bus service all over the Sub-division was totally stopped since the 28th September. The Royal Mail—the only Bus carrying mail bags—ran from Contai to Contai Road Station; but no passenger except Government servants were allowed to travel by that Bus. An instance might be cited to illustrate the rigour of the permit system. Mr. Saroj Kumar Maiti, Advocate, Calcutta High Court, was not even allowed to travel by the only Bus—the Contai Royal Mail—on 1-10-42 when he was going home in Puja Vacation. People were to walk on foot from Contai Road Station to Contai—a distance of 36 miles and also all over the Sub-division.

The Strict censorship was established in all the Post Offices in the Sub-division so that not a single letter either in Post card or in envelope could pass from the Sub-division or delivered to any person without being censored and passed.

The Bengal Government had declared the following Associations of the Contai Sub-division illegal under Section 16 (1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1908—(1) Contai Sub-division Congress Committee, (2) Contai National School, (3) Bhagwanpur Thana Congress Committee, (4) Potashpur Thana Congress Committee, (5) Egra Thana Congress Committee, (6) Panipural Congress Committee and (7) Hijli Tarun Sangha.

On 24-9-42, at dead of night the S. D. O. and the S. P.

with armed constables surrounded and entered the houses of Sri Satish Chandra Dinda, a local Zamindar and Secretary of the Hindu Mahasabha, Contai Branch, Sri Dharanidhar Dinda, M.A., B.L., Sri Sarendra Natha Jana, a local Zamindar and Sri Sachindra Nath Maiti another local Zamindar and took away their milk cows. The police took rice, dal etc. from Sri Abanti Kumar Maiti, Sri Achinta Nath Sasmal, Munshi Mahiuddin and others under Rule 75-A, of the India Defence Rules.

From the 1st October about 500 military was posted all over the Sub-division and was divided into 12 camps situated at different places.

Every day Aeroplanes patrolled all over the Sub-division. On the 2nd October an Aeroplane fell down at Magra field at a distance of about 3 miles from Contai. The pilot was a European and his life was saved. The European soldiers guarded the Aeroplane. They took their bath naked and showed coins and called women.

Police and Military Firing

On 22-9-42, the S. D. O., S. D. P. O., and a posse of armed constables went to the locality, surrounded a number of houses in the neighbouring village and forced the villagers to fill up the cut. On the sight of the police the female inmates of some houses shut up the doors which were broken open by the police though there were no male members. The people assembled near the cut to protest against the forcible employment of the co-villagers for repairs The D. P, Overseer having promised to pay proper wages for the work and to allow them to do, the crowd began to disperse. In the meantime there was a heavy shower of rain and the people took shelter from rain under the trees on the bank of Mahisagoth tank at a distance of about a furlong from the cut and the police was reinforced from the Sub-divisional quarter. On arrival of the reinforcement the S. D. O. with the armed force hurriedly walked up from the cut towards the people and wanted to speak with some of them. As soon as some of the crowd approached the S. D. O., severe lathi charge began. At this the people paced backwards, but were then attacked with brick-bats. The police then fired 30 rounds. As a result of the lathi-charge and firing about twenty-four persons were wounded of whom some wanted water. One boy proceeding to give water received bayonet charge. The police dragged 3 wounded persons by holding their legs from the bank of the Mahisagoth tank (the place of firing) to the truck going to Contai town. On the way 2 of the wounded persons succumbed and the third in the hospital. Three doctors from the town

visited the locality and gave wounded persons first aid. In the morning some of the seriously wounded persons were admitted in the hospital and the others were treated privately. Out of the wounded admitted in the hospital the next morning one succumbed, the total number of deaths being four.

S. D. O., the S. P., with a batch of armed constables raided the volunteers' camp at Belbani in P. S. Ramnagar, assaulted the volunteers sleeping there and burnt down all the articles of the camp on 27-9-42. The party then began to enter the village and was faced with a crowd. The police opened fire to disperse the crowd. As a result of this firing three persons died on the spot and about fourteen persons were wounded. The police, having retired from within the village, was again faced with another crowd near the volunteers' camp and again fired to disperse the crowd. Here also two persons died instantaneous death and about seven persons were wounded. The police left the place with the dead bodies of the first three persons and three wounded persons but did not take the last two dead persons. One of the wounded persons died in the hospital, the total number of deaths being six.

On 29-9-42, about 5,000 people went to raid the Bhagwanpur Government Police Station. The Police Station was well guarded with barbed wire fencing with one gate 3 feet wide. As soon as the procession reached the Thana gate Sadhansu Mohan Das Gupta, Manager, Contai Khas Mahal and the Second Officer-in-Charge, Bhagwanpur Police Station, opened fire on the processionists. As a result 13 persons died on the spot and about 99 persons were injured. Bhibhuti Bhusan Das lived about 30 hours after gun-shot. He was kept in Thana Hajat without water, food and medical treatment. Krishna Kumar Chakarvarti, Kabyatirtha (M. A. passed), Head Pandit of Bhimseswari M. E. School, was shot at when he was giving water to a wounded person. Being shot at he fell into the pond and his dead body floated over water next day. Paros Chandra Jana died in Birbanda hospital and Chinendra Nath Dalapet died on 16-10-42 in the Thana Hajat. Some wounded persons awaited. In all 16 persons died in the Thana raid.

On 30-9-42 in the afternoon the D. M. and the S. D. O. with an armed force forced the students, pleaders, and passers by including zamindars to load a motor truck with bricks and started for Marisda to repair the cut there. On their way they beat and forcibly took some persons in their truck. In course of repair work it became dark and the newly built Marisda U.P. School house was set on fire to by the District Magistrate for light to work. The police having left the place the bricks were removed by the people from the cut in the night. Next day

from 1-10-42 a batch of soldiers went to the locality, set fire to 25 houses of innocent villagers in Marisda, mercilessly beat an old man named Braja Mohan Jana, filled up the cut and then marched towards the Bhaintgarh. On their way they destroyed articles and goods in many shops at Machinda Bazar. At Bhaintgarh Motor Station the soldiers opened fire to disperse the mob resulting in 2 deaths one of which died instantaneously and another was struggling when one of the soldiers kicked him at the neck to death. On their way to Contai they arrested about 15 villagers and shop-keepers at Machinda Bazar.

In P. S. Pataspur on 3-10-42, the S. D. O., S. P., the Circle Officer and a batch of military and armed constables went to the thana and on their way they were faced with a crowd of about 8 thousand people at Khar. The police opened fire to disperse the mob resulting in one death. One was injured.

On 8-10-42, the police and military party headed by the S. D. O., reached Teparpara and having found some people on the Teparpara bundh they fired from tommy guns. As a result of this one person named Ganadhar Santra died there and nine wounded.

On 13-10-42, a batch of police accompanied by a batch of military entered the village of Alingiri in P. S. Egra to set fire to the houses of the villagers. Some persons were seen standing on the side of a tank at a distance of a quarter of a mile from the soldiers. They were shot at by the military. At this firing two were killed and one was wounded.

OTHER ATROCITIES

A cut was made on Contai-Belda Road near Baranalgaria on 29-9-42. After this the District Magistrate, the S. D. O., and a Police party went to the locality, entered the village Tajpur. The D. M. himself and his bodyguards mercilessly belaboured the respectable gentlemen, Sri Srikrishna Maiti (age 90), Sri Naba Krishna Maiti (age 70), Sri Basanta Kumar Maiti (age 90) and two young men of this Maity family and other persons of the neighbouring houses. They also belaboured the villagers of Rasulpur and Baranalgaria. The above mentioned gentlemen and Sri Kenaram Adhikari, the President of the Basudebpur bazar on the Contai-Belda D. B. Road were severely beaten, taken to the place of cut and all were made to fill up the cut as coolies. 13 persons including Sri Krishna Maiti, Basanta Kumar Maiti, Naba Kumar Maiti and others at Tajpur were then arrested and taken to Contai-Sub-Jail Hajat.

In order to terrorise the people of the Sub-division the

District Authorities adopted the most reprehensible policy of looting and house-burning not only of Congress Volunteers, but of innocent villagers and educational institutions in broad daylight and in presence of Civil Officers including I.C.S., D.M., S.D.O., Second Officer, Third Officer, and others. One could not imagine that the Government would stoop so low to curb down the spirit of Nationalism and Independence in the politically conscious people of Contai Sub-division, hankering after freedom of their own Motherland. Every day the soldiers of a camp were divided into three or four batches and each batch with some civil and police officers and also with some constables started in different directions, entered villages, set fire to houses and stayed near the houses so long as the houses were completely burnt down. When a police party started towards some direction the people—both male and female of the villages in that area—left their houses, went into paddy fields and stayed there so long as the police did not leave the villages. If a police party reached a village at 11 or 12 a. m. the people left their houses with their cooked rice and plantain leaves and took their midday meals on bundhs in paddy fields or on the side of tanks. The police severely beat any persons they found on their way and demanded the names of volunteers to know the places where they hid their belongings such as ornaments, cash and other valuables.

The local authorities encouraged the Mahommedans to help the police in pointing out, looting and setting fire to houses of their Hindu neighbours, and it was known that the Mahommedans were bribed and coaxed by the Government for help. The Mahommedans were also assured that they would be exempted from all repressive measures. They were also directed to single out their houses by putting crescent flags on their houses. The Mahommedans of village Darura and some other neighbouring villages of Contai were called to the thana and asked to do this. But it was a matter of pride that they all with one voice refused to do these nasty things. They further said they would obey neither the dictates of Congress, nor the behest of the Government, and that they could only obey the mandate of the Muslim League. With this they left the thana and paraded the town. In P. S. Khejuri and Patashpur Mahommedans engaged themselves in looting the houses of their Hindu neighbours. The Mahommedans also looted the houses of Hindu villagers in Chandanpur P. S. Ramnagar. It was definitely known that this was encouraged by the local officials. Mr. Samar Sen I.C.S., B.O.D., Contai delivered a lecture to the Mahommedans at Kharai P. S. Pataspur to this effect on 3-10-42.

Instances were also reported of assault by police or military parties upon women, Instances of throwing young children to a distance and cows being burnt within houses were reported.

During the period under review about 700 houses of innocent villagers and educational institutions were burnt by the police pointed out by the local officials all over the Sub-division and the loss sustained in this looting and house-burning, though not yet correctly estimated, might amount to more than two lacs of rupees.

During this setting fire to houses in Uddhabpur in P. S. Egra the police opened fire and a man named Gadhadhar Chunia received injury on his left arm and the wife of Satischandra Roy was dragged and thrown away. The police looted Rs. 300/- in hard cash from Sri Narayanan Maiti of Daudpur and Rs. 500/- in hard cash in all from the co-sharers of Sri Satish Chandra Roy. One European soldier, while forcibly breaking open the door of Sri Jhatu Charan Barik of Basudepur P. S. Egra, was shot dead with his own gun. In P. S. Egra in the presence of D. M. the houses of Sri Srikrishna Maiti and his family of Tajpur were looted and his pucca buildings were set fire to with the help of petrol causing a loss of property to the extent of about of Rs. 20,000. Besides this Rs. 20,000 in hard cash and silver of considerable weight were looted. In village Belighai the house of Sri Padmalochan Giri was looted and burnt causing loss of property to the extent of about Rs. 5,000/—250/- in hard cash, about 15 tolas of gold ornaments and other valuables were taken and 500 maunds of paddy was burnt and his shop was looted.

In P. S. Khejuri the police looted Rs. 4,000 in hard cash hidden below the earth from the house of Sri Digamber Das of Janka. Besides the cash money other moveable properties of some other persons worth about Rs. 16,000 were destroyed or looted. On 9-10-42, early in the morning 30 European soldiers with one Special Magistrate Mr. Pares Chandra Sen as their Commander raided the houses of Sri Bhupendra Nath Bera, a local zamindar and Advocate of the Calcutta High Court, destroyed the articles worth about Rs. 500 and took away some gold ornaments and cash. The soldiers took his brother Narendhra Nath Bera to Ajoya and forced him to set fire to the houses of Ajoya Middle English School and Girl's Lower Primary School. They also arrested his brother Jogendra Nath Bera and threatened him at the point of gun shot to help the police to establish Government control in Khejuri Thana.

In P. S. Contai on 8-10-42, the houses of Sri Prodyot Kumar Shee and Radha Ranjan Das of village Kanaidigi were set

fire to by the police in the presence of Mr. Samar Sen I.C.S., the S.D.O., Contai. Before setting fire, their houses were looted and clothes, gold ornaments and five bundles of yarn were taken away by the S.D.O., and the police in the lorry to Contai. The party also set fire to all the houses at Kalinagar Bazar in village Danda-Parulia. Sri Radha Ranjan Das's paddy weighing about 1000 maunds was burnt. On his way back Mr. Sen, having drunk brandy from the dispensary of Dr. Das, mercilessly beat Sj. Mrityunjoy Bhunia, dragged him into the paddy field and kicked him with his boot. He was almost on death bed for 3 days and then recovered. In village Adambarh, P. S. Contai a woman of the family of Sri Madhusudan Jana was dragged, her ornaments were taken away, and the woman was then thrown into pond. The condition of the woman became very serious.

In P. S. Bhagwanpur the house of Radhagovinda Maity of Karulbarh was looted and about 10 tolas of gold and other articles worth Rs. 300 were taken away by the police. Some Mahommedans were tempted to take part in the looting. While looting the house of Barendra Nath Das of Bartan in P. S. Bhagwanpur the police found his cousin brother Bisweswar Das and threatened him with gun and forced him to give Rs. 100. While withdrawing a gun from Zamindar Srimanta Kumar Patra of Kishorepur, the police party forcibly took Rs. 152 from him. While returning to the Thana from Kishorepur the police entered a poor hut just by the side of the D. B. Road, the owner of the house being Ramanath Bera, a poor fisherman, and took away a wooden box containing Rs. 377 only. Besides this, the whole force of soldiers and police, number varying from 50 to 150, are being maintained in the thana by looting rice, dal, vegetables, goat, ducks, cocks, fish etc., from house to house and different shops environing the Thana office at Bhagwanpur. During the house-looting the wives of Babus Surendranath Dutta and Behari Lal Dutta of Bhagwanpur were assaulted.

Collective fines of Rs. 1,000 were imposed on villages Marishda, Machinda, Bhaintagarh and Kanaidighi in P. S. Contai and of Rs. 15,000 on Gopinathpur, Bhimeswari, Bhagwanpur, Kakra and Madhabpur and Rs. 5,000 on Mirjapur in P. S. Bhagwanpur. Moslems and Government offiers were exempted from payment.

In the Contai Sub-division Sub-jail, there was accomodation for 14 prisoners only. But about 140 prisoners both convicted and under-trial were kept in the cell for more than a month. More than 100 convicts and under-trial prisoners were kept there still longer. Besides this in Bhagwanpur 3 persons were wounded in firing there and were confined in the Thana

Hazat. No water, food and medical treatment were given to them for two days and as a result Bhibhuti Bhusan Das died on the night of 30th September '42. Dhirendra Nath Dalpat died without treatment on 16-10-42, the fateful day of Typhoon. It is also reported that while he was a little better he was assaulted by a constable with his gun.

Kaviraj Raghunath Maity, Vaidya-sastri, Kavyatirtha, who was suffering from paralysis of the left side of his body since 1931, was arrested and taken to jail Hajat on 30.9.42. In the jail Hajat he fainted and afterwards he was placed in the Contai Charitable hospital. He was neither tried, nor detained under any rule, nor any charges were framed against him for long.

The Government took all the guns and cameras possessed by the private persons of the sub-division. They also took cameras from shops.

The Government declared over a dozen Congress Committees and Volunteer's Camps besides the list already given, situated in the Contai Sub-division, illegal.

Of the houses burnt, there were in P. S. Contai—about 250 houses; P.S. Ramnagar—about 200 houses; P.S. Egra—about 130 houses; P. S. Pateshpur—about 170 houses; P. S. Bhagwanpur—about 30 houses; P.S. Khejuri—about 20 houses. Total about 700 houses. Besides these some of the houses were also looted.

Terrible Tornado in Midnapore

On the 16th of October, 1942, a terrible tornado of the Typhoon type from the Bay of Bengal passed over the whole of the District of Midnapore. It began about 7 or 8.0' clock in the morning of the 16th and spent itself up by 3.0' clock in the early hours of the morning of the 17th. The velocity of the wind, it is reported, was 460 miles per minute. The tornado was accompanied by heavy rain—at certain places it was as heavy as 12 inches in less than 24 hours.

In the afternoon of the 16th, there was a high tidal bore, forced up by the tornado from the Bay, which swept over the dykes in a fearful wave about 10 Ft. higher than the top of the highest area in the southern part of Midnapore, the south-eastern parts of Thanas Ramagar, Contai and Kahajuri of the Contai-Sub-division and of Thanas Sutahata and Nandigram of the Tamluk Sub-division, the devastation being of much greater magnitude in Contai than in Tamluk. The sea-dykes, which were neither properly maintained, nor the required height was kept for several years last, had to give way in several places to the strong current of the tidal bore and the sluice-gates were either smashed or damaged,

The loss of human beings and live-stock was greater due to the breaches on the sea-dykes.

Where the tidal bore did not come directly, the salt water had swept in through the rivers, canals and creeks, the lock-gates of the outlets being smashed by the tidal bore. The flood caused by torrential and continuous rain was augmented by the influx of sea water, and as a result, large areas were under water to a depth of 5 to 6 feet and the crops were submerged. Some areas were under water even upto the 20th day from the date of the tornado and flood.

The tornado and the tidal bore wrought terrible destruction from end to end of the affected area. The coastal areas were the worst-affected. In the worst-affected areas, there was no trace of human habitation. People and cattle were carried over a long distance in the strong current of the bore. The cattle were totally destroyed. Of the inhabitants, between 60 to 70 percent were perished. Many families became altogether extinct. In some families the majority were killed leaving behind either an old man or a young girl or a daughter-in-law or in some cases two or three members of the family. Of the surviving 50 percent were injured. No trees were standing nor any birds or animals were seen there. The whole area was covered with salt water, fresh water tanks being filled with sand and salt water and in come cases dead-bodies of human beings and cattle were floating on. Wherever any bushes or other natural obstacles existed, flood-borne corpses and dead cattle were being entangled in hundreds. The stench from the rotten bodies was so intense that it was difficult to approach such areas.

In the areas not washed by the high tidal bore, people and cattle were blown away and dashed to the ground, against tree trunks or thrown into water after being carried to a distance. Not a single mud-wall was standing and the tin, tile or thatched roofs of the houses were totally torn out and blown to bits. Human beings and domestic animals met death through being buried under collapsed walls and roofs. Grain-storage bins were shattered and the grains were blown to the fore wind. Of the big trees not one was standing, the river-beds, canals and water-ways and roads being choked up and blocked by fallen trees. Communications became very difficult and living almost impossible due to enormous quantities of decomposing vegetables and corpses that were lying rotten on the river banks, high lands and in tanks everywhere.

In the Contai Sub-division only the loss of human lives was not less than 10,000 and that of cattle was about 30,000. In the whole district of Midnapore the loss of human lives

might have been about 20,000 and that of cattle about 60,000. The Contai Sub-division had a population of about six and a half lacs, and thus lacs of people who were still alive in this Sub-division were going without food, water, bedding, clothing, shelter, and medical aid. The distress and miseries of the people of the tidal-bore-affected areas were 20 times greater than those of the people in the cyclone-affected areas. Thousands of people there were facing death after having survived the main cataclysm. The survivors there were fighting with each other for a cup of drinking water or for a handful of "chira" or a piece of cloth. The entire population was waiting or lying about in the open air without any shelter.

What passed over Midnapore on the 16th October 1942, could not be called a cyclone but a cataclysm the like of which was never witnessed in Bengal within living memory. In 1864 it is said a severe cyclone swept over this province, but that too pales into insignificance before this one. The All-India Radio reported that such extensive disaster as befell the people of Midnapore this time had never been witnessed in India except in the earthquake in Quetta. The Commandant of the platoon D. C. L. I. stationed at Contai was reported to have observed that the devastation of Contai was ten times greater than that of Tobruk when the latter fell.

The aftermath of this frightful catastrophe was still more horrible.

Mr. Samar Sen, S. D. O. Contai did not think it worth while to come out of his bungalow to see the devastated condition of the town and the pitiable condition of its people till it was 1 p. m. on the following day. He did not organize either officials or non-officials for any rescue work, nor did he take any steps to give first relief to the dying survivors. It was to be noted that the S. D. O. went out to visit the affected area personally in the mofussil on 7-11-42 the 23rd day after the occurrence. This showed utter callousness of civil officers towards humanitarian work. But the members of the D. C. L. I. posted at Contai gave hot water, tea, condensed milk powder, milk, biscuits, loaf, brandy etc., whatever they had to these dying survivors. They also gave food and brandy to the four females among the rescued who were then in labour pain. These females delivered there and the babies examined by medical officers.

The Contai Sub-division being a 'denial area' all the boats and dingies were previously seized, destroyed and burnt by the Government. On the day following the tornado, one small dingi was seen engaged in carrying the surviving people from flood-hills and in taking tube-well water from the sand hills to the interior of the flood-affected area. This

boat, too, was seized by the officer-in-charge P. S. Contai at the instruction of the civilian S. D. O. and kept unused for 15 hours. The owner of the dingi fell at the feet of Mr. Sen and begged his permission for plying the boat under police guard to bring the dying survivors then floating with the aid of thatches, logs, bamboos, trees etc. on the water. But this pitiful prayer was not granted. Had this prayer been allowed, more lives might have been saved. This sort of treatment towards dying people by the local authorities was so inhuman that humanity would feel ashamed of it.

Midnapore being always a strongly pro-Congress district, the August movement received strong support from the people. Indiscriminate lathi-charges, repeated firings, looting and burning of hundreds of houses of innocent persons and educational institutions and similar measures initiated by the Government failed to stop the movement. The exasperated District and Sub-divisional authorities decided to take advantage of the calamity to wreck vengeance on the helpless and dying people of Midnapore. The District Magistrate and the S. D. O. openly said that no relief should be given to the suffering people, that the people should be left to face the terrible consequences of this grim disaster and that no non-official relief committees should be allowed to work in Midnapore. The recommendation of this nature by the District Magistrate to the local Government were not, however, approved by the latter.

The little relief attempted by local people was violently interfered with by the local officials and police. No volunteer was allowed to administer relief unmolested, and therefore no help or aid to the distressed could be given openly. In spite of this, Congress volunteers were giving first relief to the distressed of the affected areas. The local Government sent rice to the Contai Sub-division, but no relief centre was started in any interior of the Sub-division till 23 days passed since the day of the catastrophe. Materials for 6 tube-wells were sent by the local Government, but not a single one was sunk for a long time.

Even after this frightful catastrophe, the local police, in the name of house search, entered the houses of Babus Amulya Ratan Dinda, Satish Chandra Dinda, Shivaprosad Jana, Sachindra Kumar Naiti and others of Contai town without asking the female inmates of the houses to move elsewhere and looted polished and scented rice (leaving coarse rice), atta, flour, dal, sugar, kerosene oil, mustard oil, paddy etc. at a time when Babu Satish Chandra Dinda was giving daily relief to about 50 suffering persons.

The police also arrested Babu Basanta Kumar Das,

President, Nayaput Union Board, No. 11 in P. S. Contai one of the worst affected Unions, on the sea coast, after the typhoon. Basanta Babu lost all his children his two sons and one daughter, and the only daughter of his younger brother. He had no water, no food no clothing and no shelter for the survivors of his family when he was arrested.

The Civilian District Magistrate did not inform the Local Government of this terrible disaster for a week. The local Government, being first informed of this colossal disaster by the military, at once sent a relief party with rice, chira, gur, water, kerosene oil etc. in a launch to Contai. The party reached Petun on river "Rasulpur" in the Contai Sub-division on the 24th October 42 and began distributing chira, gur, rice etc. to the suffering people on the 25th. The leader of the party informed the local S. D. O of their arrival who in turn informed the District Magistrate. The District Magistrate at once sent orders prohibiting the relief party sent by the Bengal Government from giving any relief to the suffering people at Midnapore. The party, however, went on distributing rice, chira, gur etc. to the distressed. The local civilian S. D. O. Mr Samar Sen and another special Magistrate Mr. B. K. Ghosh were at once deputed by the District Magistrate to the place and rice, chira, gur etc. were taken over from the party on the 26th. The relief party had to leave Contai for Calcutta handing over everything to the local S. D. O on the 27th in spite of the crying demand for rice, gur, chira, water etc. from the dying people.

The publication of the report of this storm havoc was prohibited by the Press Censor and a Government Press Note on this was first published on the 3rd November '42, after 18 days from the occurrence.

The Contai-Belda D. B. Road was cleared up by the Military within a week from the date of cyclone. But no passenger Bus was allowed by the District Magistrate to run over the road till the 1st November, although there was a tremendous rush of people from outside to Contai to see the members of their families and also from Contai to put up elsewhere.

Again after the visit of Hon'ble Ministers three Buses were allowed to run over the road, but no passengers could travel by the Buses unless they were allowed by the local authorities. This permit system was as harassing and insulting as possible and permits were not granted to all. No passenger was allowed to travel in the passenger-buses from Contai Road Station to Contai although every day 200 to 300 passengers got down at the Contai Road Station and

walked a distance of 36 miles with women and children.

The relatives of the people of Contai living outside Contai were naturally very anxious to get the news of their relatives in Contai. And the letters were unnecessarily delayed from 3 to 6 days due to censor while in ordinary course letters took only 2 days to come from Contai to Calcutta.

The military cleansed the official quarters of the town by forced labour. They entered the houses of respectable gentlemen and forced Professors, Teachers, Pleaders, Zamindars and others to work from 7 A. M. to 4 P. M. without any food. The military worked in batches and as such had time for their meals. But the people of the town, who were not at all ready for any work and as such did not take their breakfast before 7 A. M. or had nothing in their houses for the breakfast, were all of a sudden caught hold of by soldiers and compelled to work without any food from 7 A. M. to 4 P. M.

Even after this colossal disaster in which a very small number of cows had survived, the soldiers were forcibly taking away cows specially pregnant and milch cows from the town and the suburbs for their meals and slaughtering them within the High School compound which was in the middle of the town and surrounded by Hindu residents.

The disaster was very grim but no relief centres were opened in the worst flood-affected areas even up to the 7th November 42. Government doles were being distributed at the Egra Police Station, Contai Police Station, criminal court and other places on the D. B. road where regular beggars assembled. Only the much-cursed Congress volunteers and workers were moving in the worst affected areas giving as much relief to the distressed as possible.

The people of Midnapore were keenly feeling the want of late Deshapran Birendra Nath Sasmal at this critical time of Midnapore.

It was criminal neglect of duty and utter callousness towards humanitarian work on the part of the Government officers to keep the area without any relief for such a long period after the occurrence and not to allow any non-official philanthropic bodies to give relief to the suffering humanity.

As far as the reports could be gathered up till 7th November 42, 36 houses were burnt, 43 persons killed and 70 wounded in the Tamluk Sub-division. Persons who suffered were all well-to-do and respectable people. In some cases womenfolk were not allowed to go out their houses which were set fire to by the police or military who remained on guard at the gates. In many cases women were rescued

by means of ladders thrown over the roofs of the houses; in other cases they were rescued through unsuspected back doors, which were not guarded by the police or military, with great difficulty.

OUTRAGING MODESTY.

Mahisadal Bazar: 2 women (one Adhar pramanik's wife and the other Nilmoni Pramanik's wife) and again on the night of the 16th October, just after the fateful cyclone, 4 women who took shelter under an echala in Mahisadal Bazar, were assaulted and molested by the military.

Puiyada: 2 women, one Kedar Dheik's wife and the other Bunadhar Dass', were outraged.

In Police Station Tamluk, Union 11, from Chaitanya Das's House, 30 guineas and notes of nearly Rs. 11,000 were taken away by the police.

In Police Station Mahisadal, village Chandrapatrah, Jiban Krishna Bag's House was looted. The furniture of the house was taken to the compound outside and set fire to. The women-folk kept under the sun from 10 A. M. to 4 P. M. and were obliged to enjoy the scorching rays of the midday sun.

In Police Station Sutahata, village Jaynagar, Apurba Ghora's House was looted by the police. Some Musalmans incited by the police co-operated with the latter. Loss was about Rs. 15,000 in hard cash and ornaments.

On 30th October, '42, in the village Lakhya, P.S. Mahisadal Pulin Behari Karan's dwelling place was burnt.

In village Kalikakundu, in P. S. Mahisadal, four houses were burnt.

On the 4th November, '42, in Police Station Mahisadal, Hansadhwaj Maiti's house was set fire to. Hansadhwaj Maiti was the Vice-Chairman of the Tamluk Local Board.

Further 69 more cases of house burning were reported.

We give below an extract from the speech of Mr. K. C. Neogy in the Central Assembly:—

"Many of the Calcutta newspapers suspended their publication as a protest against the interference by the censoring authorities with the publication of news depicting the true situation in that city. And in an article which appeared in the Statesman, Delhi, dated Friday, the 21st August, headed "Newspapers in suspense", we find the following rather significant observations:—

'Government in Bengal should also attend without loss of time to statements made and repeated in certain quarters about events in Calcutta. Whether true or false they cannot safely be ignored. For want of a reply from Government the public is believing the worst.'

"No reply came to this from the Government, and the public and all along believed the worst and the public were convinced that the worst was really what actually happened. My Honourable friend, Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi, gave his personal testimony as regards the indiscriminate shooting that took place in Calcutta to which he was a personal witness. I am now speaking in the presence of my Honourable Leader, Dr. P. N. Banerjee, who has also some personal experience of shooting which was indulged in a locality, twenty-four hours after the act of hooliganism was committed there. After twenty-four hours of the happening, the police came on the scene and shot down people at random creating panic in the locality and then the police went away. This matter was debated in the Calcutta Corporation itself and they adopted a resolution condemning all these outrages. The House should remember that the Calcutta Corporation does not enjoy any privilege which the Legislature enjoys, and any statement which any member of the Corporation makes there must have been uttered with the utmost caution. I am going to quote just a few words from the speech delivered by a very prominent Barrister, Mr. N. C. Chatterjee. He said:

"'I openly declare from my place in this House that if this policy of frightfulness which has been pursued in Calcutta had been pursued in the City of London, the Head of the Metropolitan Police would have been lynched.'

"Then he gave several instances about which he had satisfied himself, particularly one in which a boy of seven was killed. He was standing on the ledge of his house in a lane. A sergeant entered the lane and shot him. That lane was not the scene of any hooliganism or disturbance and yet the sergeant rushed into that lane and shot dead that little boy, and got away after committing this act of great bravery."

Besides these horrible and heinous acts of the Government, Bengal equally sufferred with India in the general policy of arrests etc. We quote below an extract from the speech of Mr. A. K. Fazlul Haq:—

"Replying to a question in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on February 19, 1943, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Haq, Chief Minister and Minister in-charge of the Home portfolio, informed the House that 1019 persons had so far been arrested and detained under Rule 129, and 1210 persons under Rule 26 of the D. I.-R. in the province. He further stated that the number of persons convicted under the Defence of India Rules in the province in connection with political and anti-war activities and the civil disobedience movement from August last to the end of December 1942 was 1959."

Again Premier Sir Nazimuddin replying to a question in

the Bengal Legislative Assembly on September 28th, 1943, said: "Eighty-eight persons were killed and 453 injured in Bengal as a result of Police firing between August 7, and November 30th, 1942. He further added that these figures excluded casualties from Military firing on which information was not available."

Sir Nazimuddin informed the House that 1129 persons were arrested and 1655 detained under the Defence of India Act and Rules, and 818 convicted under the Defence of India Act and Rules and the Indian Penal Code for political reasons between August 1, 1942 and August 15, 1943.

Replying to another question, Sir Nazimuddin said that 20 members of the Bengal Legislature were arrested under the Defence of India Rules, of whom three were convicted and 17 detained.

Lastly we quote below a case to show that how indiscriminately a large number of innocent persons were arrested and prosecuted with the result that even the courts under this Government could not convict more than 25% of the accused :—

A message from Purlia, Bengal, dated September 6th, 1943 says :—

"In Barabazar Thana Burning Case, which is finally disposed of, 17 accused were sentenced to 4 years R. I. while the remaining 10 were acquitted."

The facts of the case are that the Barabazar Police Station was completely burnt down and along with it all record destroyed during the disturbances in 1942. In that case, 68 persons were tried by a Special Magistrate. He discharged 15, framed charges against 43, and convicted 28 and sentenced to 7 years R. I. The Special Judge, in appeal, ordered retrial of these 28, in accordance with the Federal Court Judgement. They were retried by ordinary court, who convicted, in September 1943, 17, acquitted 10, and discharged one. Thus finally out of 68 persons accused, only 17 were convicted and sentenced to 4 years R. I. each.

This case is only an instance to show as to how the Police, even after their unchecked and inhuman atrocities on the innocent and unarmed peoples, prosecuted them subsequently to throw a veil over their own mis-deeds and further to persecute and penalise those who somehow could not be victimised by the police otherwise. The Police persecution thus penetrated deep and wide into the population of Bengal. Their sufferings have known no limit and no end. But the Fire of Freedom is always burning bright in the heart of Bengal.

Again on the Bengal atrocities, the Bengal Premier made the following admissions :—

Calcutta, February 18th, 1944: According to a statement made by the Chief Minister, Sir Nazimuddin, during question-time in the Bengal Legislative Assembly today, 195 Congress camps and houses and 81 other houses, etc., belonging to the Government, Public bodies and private individuals were burnt by Government forces and the Congress respectively during the last five months of 1942, in the Sub-divisions of Tamluk and Contai (Midnapore district).

Of these cases of incendiarism, all but 29 occurred before the cyclone which passed over the district about the end of 1942.

Asked what was the authority of the Chief Minister for saying that houses were burnt by the Congress, Sir Nazimuddin said that it was the report of the local officers.

Replying to a supplementary question whether "in view of the widespread incendiarism committed by Government's forces the Government was prepared to inquire into the matter", the Chief Minister said that he felt that it was the duty of the Government then in power to deal with this question. A Government that came into office after an interval of 18 months could not go and look into this question.

Asked what were the objects in burning the houses of Congressmen and Congress offices by Government forces, the Chief Minister said that, as far as he could find out, it appeared that action in each case was taken in restoring law and order.

Asked whether the "repression scheme" was still continuing in the Midnapore district, Sir Nazimuddin said that his report from the Tamluk area was rather bad. There had been cases of kidnapping and realization of "fines" from those supporting the Government forces. Recently in a case, a fine of Rs. 500, was realised from one person by some unknown persons.

The Chief Minister added that he had also received a representation that certain oppressions were committed by the Police. He had called for a report and proposed to take action if it was found that there was any truth in it. "On the other hand, I would like to take this opportunity to bring to the notice of members of the House that parts of the Tamluk area are still very bad and there is every reason to believe that persons who are being kidnapped and murdered there belong both to the Hindu and Muslim communities, and are those who have supported the forces of the Government", he said.

Answering the question whether the present Government were considering the desirability of rehabilitating the destitute persons who had been deprived of their homes and belonging as a result of incendiarism and arson committed by Govern-

ment forces, Sir Nazimuddin said that they had got no other policy of rehabilitation apart from the policy adopted by the Revenue Department as relief measures.

BOMBAY

We begin with the following statement of Miss Khurshed Naoroji, a grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India, which she issued in August to describe what she called "the repressive orgies of the Government":—

"We have been robbed of our speech but the voice of India has spoken through her action during the past few days after the arrest of Mahatmaji and other leaders. And yet I have felt throttled like in a nightmare at the misrepresentation of this action and the repressive orgies of the Government. I must speak even if my voice reaches nobody.

"Is there a doubt in the mind of any one that the Government has gone full length in the exercise of violence, illegal and unnecessary? Although I can speak in detail about occurrences in Bombay, similar or worse things have happened all over the country. Crowds have been fired upon, not once or twice but scores of times, for no crime graver than their determination to assemble and declare their freedom. There have also been frequent cases of indiscriminate shootings, for no reason whatsoever, presumably as terroristic. The Dyer mentality of Jallianwala Bagh massacre is still alive and perhaps more so now than before. I can do nothing better than quote from the unpartisan testimony of fifty residents of the Shivaji park area in Bombay among whom are physicians, scientists, professors and lawyers who say "We have seen the strange ineffective and at the same time dangerous action of military squads armed with sub-machineguns shoot at random up and down the road. This happened, for instance, in the case of military contingent stationed at the junction of Gokhale Road and Lady Jameshedji Road, who were shooting at random at regular intervals without reference to the character of persons who were either on or passing along the road. Whipping on naked bodies of batches of people, regardless of what they did or did not do, has been carried out. Black-and-tan methods are also being used and military pickets have gone into houses and beaten up and otherwise humiliated the residents. Aside from the actual exercise of brutality, there has been an enormous show of it, Bren-gun carriers, armoured tanks and low flying aeroplanes, which dropped tear-gas bombs. The Government has handed the cities of India over to the laws of the jungle. Among the most tragic victims of armed fury was brave Devu who was shot dead in front of

the K.E.M. Hospital. There was no crowd, he was all by himself, there were military pickets and his crime was to have shouted "Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai".

(This incident is described in the letter of Dr. Jivraj Mehta also which we are giving hereafter).

"Crowds have been fired on several times at intervals of ten minutes or so, they retreated for a while with as many of the dead and wounded as they could carry, but they were back on the spot to face the bullet again and again. This has happened not alone in one area but in several parts of the same town. Individuals like Devu have always shown unexampled bravery. The fear of arms, although there, does not strike a fraction of the terror it used to do before or as it does, among unarmed Europeans and others. Again crowds have nowhere, in spite of the gravest provocation attempted to kill any one, British or Indian. This is of great credit to them, particularly when they had ample opportunities and even provocation for behaving otherwise. Non-violence in its base of non-killing has been achieved. This achievement is all the more precious, for there was little organisational control during the past few days but only the inner discipline and restraint which the masses imposed upon themselves.

"I pay my homage to the urban population of India for not doing what they could have easily done and for their great courage. But there were certain acts like stone-throwing and uprooting of plants and trees which, apart from being in variance with our way of life, show mere anger. Whoever may have committed these acts, it is the duty of the masses and to their own interest to see that they are not repeated.

"I know that my advice would fall on deaf ears unless I proposed some plan of action for our cities at least for the next few days. The peoples' energies that have been released should be made to produce good results and, therefore, should be conducted into:

"1. Organisation of hundreds and thousands of assemblies of women and men who spontaneously gather at street corners and elsewhere. At those assemblies, speeches straight from the heart will of course be made by any such as is taking part in the non-violent revolution and together with this, the Declaration of Freedom circulated by the All-India Congress Committee will be read out by all. "We declare that we are equal citizens of free India. The British Government is an unhappy memory of the past and we are determined to efface it as soon and swiftly as we can. British laws are dead and nothing in the world can make us obey them. In place of the British State which we are smashing

by going the fullest length under Ahimsa, we will create the Free State of India independent of dominations and caste and dependent only on the sovereign wishes of the people.

"2. Painting of roads, house-walls and all suitable places with the message of Mahatma Gandhi and sticking of posters.

"3. Causing deadlocks by strikes and other non-violent means.

"4. Continuing of strikes in schools and colleges and factories and shops and their extension to other spheres. The strikes of various groups should fraternise with each other and carry out the first three tasks.

"Let me pay my homage once again to the masses in our cities for their bravery and their inner discipline and I hope that they will show still greater determination and yet not cause injury to life."

How innocent people were humiliated and subjected to untold troubles at Bombay will be known from the following extract of Mr. K. C. Neogy's speech in the Central Assembly demanding an enquiry into alleged police and Military excesses :—

"I would make a passing reference to Bombay. 34 Commercial Associations led by the Indian Merchants' Chamber passed a resolution on Monday the 17th August 42, "condemning the repressive measures taking the form of the police and the military compelling the house-holders and merchants who were at their places of business and also passers-by to clean the streets of obstacles and debris littered there and effecting arrests from residential houses, shops and "padhis" even of business people who were not implicated in the disturbances and who were entirely innocent". The resolution continues: "this meeting regrets that several businessmen and their employees while engaged in their usual vocations have been beaten and arrested......"

In this connection an observation was made also in the Bombay Chronicle under the heading "Stop such Humiliation" :—

"We welcome the assurance that law and order will be maintained. We presume, however, that this does not mean that the police and troops have been given a *carte blanche* to adopt methods which are intended to humiliate innocent and respectable citizens. Most of the Bombay papers have carried the story of residents......(This is not the only paper in which this story appeared). Most of the Bombay papers have carried the story of residents and passers-by in certain localities being compelled to sweep the streets. Some Members of our staff have personally witnessed such inci-

dents, when even ladies were asked to sweep the street at the point of the gun".

Speaking on the same resolution of Mr. Neogy, Mr. N. M. Joshi said : "Sir, the Bombay Civil Liberties Union sometime ago, after the Government had initiated their policy of arresting the leaders of the Congress and after the violent protests by the people, requested the Vice-President of the Bombay Civil Liberties Union, a gentleman who is an experienced solicitor in Bombay, to make an enquiry into some of the cases; and from the enquiries made by the Vice-President of the Bombay Civil Liberties Union I have no doubt in my mind that in Bombay, too, cases of different kinds of excesses described by my Honourable freind, Mr. Neogy, have taken place. He has already mentioned that people were forced at the point of the bayonet to unjustifiable firing : firing not only on the crowd, but shooting at persons who were not in the crowd. Dr. Jewaraj Mehta, who is a very distinguished doctor in Bombay, and the head of a big hospital and medical college in Bombay had published that a boy, who was not in the midst of a crowd, and whose only fault was that he said "Gandhi Maharaj ki Jai" was shot dead in cold blood. Sir, people were dragged out of their rooms—people who had not gone out of their houses at all in the crowd—and lathi charged and very severely handled by the police.

"Sir, besides this result of the enquiry made by the Bombay Civil Liberties Union, I have also got information regarding some cases. One of these cases has happened in the district of Kaira. Some students were going about villages preaching what they call, 'satyagraha'. After finishing preaching 'satyagraha' in Kaira district. The police party which was hunting these boys, alighted from the train which these people were going to catch, and marched towards them. The leader of the boys told the officer-in-charge of the police party that they were satyagrahis and if the police wanted to arrest them they were ready to be arrested ; there would be no opposition to the arrest. In spite of this willingness of being arrested peacefully, the police fired on these students. Three of them were killed and a large number of them were wounded. Not only that, after firing on these boys the police prevented help being given to the wounded by way of water. The wounded felt thirsty, people in the village wanted to give them water ; they were prevented from giving water to the wounded. The railway staff out of pity wanted to give water to the wounded ; they were prevented from doing so. I do not think I shall find time to describe the whole incident."

"I shall give only one more instance and stop this narra-

tion of stories of excesses by the police and military. There is a small town called Nandurbar in the Dhulla District of the Bombay Presidency. On the 9th, when the students heard about the arrests of the leaders they took out a procession. These students can only be very small children because in Nandurbar there is no college and there could, therefore, be no grown up students. While the procession was marching the Police Sub-Inspector was hit either by some stone or by something else by a person whom the people in Nandurbar knew as being an enemy of this police Sub-Inspector. The Police Sub-Inspector, who was hit, got angry and instead of catching hold of his assailant and punishing him, he fired on these school children; three or four of them were again killed."

The details of the incident referred to above by Mr. Joshi regarding shooting of a boy for shouting "Gandhi ki jai" are given below from the letter of Dr. Jivaraj Mehta, M. D., M. R. C. P., which he wrote to the Editor, Bombay Sentinel on 12th August 1942.

"On enquiry I find that this report is in several essentials a gross-misrepresentation of what happened in the morning of the llth inst. About 8 to 10 children of about 8 to 15 years of age picked up early that morning three Municipal benches form the adjacent Gokhale Park and a couple of iron cages which are on the road to protect the trees, and placed them along with the wheel of a hand-cart and a road sign-post across the Hospital Avenue near the Park evidently to serve as a barricade. They were assisted by two or three men in this work. On the middle of the three benches thus placed across the Hospital Avenue they put some dry grass which they had asked for from the driver of a Victoria standing nearby. They also placed a few hats, a couple of wooden poles and a Javali mat thereon and set all this to fire. The report speaks of a "huge pile of hats and ties". The hats were about 3 to 5 only, picked up by the children from roadside where they were lying, having been thrown about the previous evening. Likewise they had tried to barricade the road by fixing a thick wire between the telephone pole on the east side of the Hospital Avenue close to the Out-patient Department of the Hospital and to the lamp-post near the south-east corner of the Building 'Krishna Nivas' on the west. After fixing this barricade and lighting the fire referred to above, they moved away. The result of the fire can be judged by the extent of the damage to the benches etc., which are still lying in the Hospital Avenue.

"At about 9 A.M. came two police lorries along the Hospital Avenue from the south side. They carried armed policemen

under charge of Sergeants. The driver of the front lorry evidently noticing the wire barricade stopped his lorry and the other followed suit. The Sergeants and the armed police alighted. There were a few people on the footpath in small groups of 3 to 4. There were no medical students on the street as stated in the report. The Sergeants and some of the armed Police proceeded to cut the wire barricade. One of the persons on the footpath shouted just at this time, 'Mahatma Gandhiji ki Jai'. And for this offence on his part he got his dues at the hands of one of them who took an aim and shot him in the chest. His has not been, alas, an isolated instance of persons being shot at in the last three days above the waist-line. The majority of the wounded received at the K. E. M. Hospital have been shot above the waist-line against all canons of civilised rule in case of civil disturbances. Even persons have been shot at while in their rooms as happened in the case of a woman living on the first floor of a building in Saitan Chowkey, who was brought to the K.E.M. Hospital where she died shortly after admission, as a result of a bullet wound in the right loin. Her son, who also happened to be in the room at the time, got the bullet in his left elbow resulting in fracture at that joint. He is in the Hospital, fortunately making satisfactory progress.

On hearing the shots which were about 3 to 4 one of the students of the Hospital, who is a member of the Stretcher party formed by our students .to go to areas of disturbance nearby with a view to collecting the wounded and send them over in an ambulance to the Hospital for as early treatment after injury as possible. But before the boy reached the Hospital gate the young innocent victim of this dastardly attack had expired."

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta also in his speech on Mr. Neogy's resolution on 12th February 1943, said :

"I confine my observations primarily to my constituency and to the city of Bombay and the district of Thana. I speak from personal knowledge of the people who were shot. I am asking Government that if they do not want to loss their reputation with those who are very friendly, and with those who are against any anti-war movement, they must accept this Resolution. I will give only two cases in my constituency where guns were used against women—not against the Japanese, not against the Germans—but against women who were proceeding to their houses or were already there. Govornment have admitted this grave misuse of authority and have come forward with small compensation instead of punishing those who were guilty. I ask the Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed whether or not these guns,

which should be used only in war against the enemy, were used in the city of Poona and whether Government do not feel that their sense of honour and sense of responsibility demand the punishment of those who were responsible for those murderous attacks on the citizens. Soldiers who fired on those innocent women, deserve nothing except hauling up for murder. I will give only one more case. In Nandurbar, a town in my constituency, school boys and girls were going in procession through the bazar on the 9th September or 10th September—I don't remember the exact date. They were going in procession from their schools. The public had nothing to do with it. It was purely school boys' demonstration. They were shouting the usual slogans--harmless slogans. What happened ? The police got scared and opened fire on those boys and girls aged mostly from five to fifteen. A procession—not of citizens, not of Congressmen, not of politicians—only of boys and girls returning home from their schools. The police fired on this crowd. The crowd began to run away. One boy of fourteen went to the place where the Congress flag was hoisted in that town and remained there. The police instead of arresting him fired on him. The boy was hit in the leg and the police went on firing till the boy was killed. The name of that boy will go down in the history of this country as a hero. I have seen the place where he was shot dead. I have met many citizens of Nandurbar. As soon as firing started the procession dispersed, all running for safety. Some ran towards the Assembly, others towards the Council of State Chamber and the rest towards the Princes Chamber—for the purpose of illustration--I am pointing out that the boys and the girls were shot after they had dispersed and were running for safety.

I therefore ask the Government to take note of this and institute an inquiry. I have complained to His Excellency the Governor of Bombay. He has promised to enquire if I sent him the necessary papers. But the police have effectively prevented me from collecting full information by terrorising those who had cars to lend me for going to Nandurbar. Even if any friend of mine offered me his own car he is threatened with the stoppage of his petrol supply."

MADRAS

The Government, persuing their general policy started promptly and vigorously, their campaign of crusade against the Congress in Madras. The various Congress-Bodies were declared unlawful. All processions, meetings, and assemblies by Congressmen and their sympathisers and

supporters in Madras city were banned by the Commissioner of Police. These restrictive and prohibitive orders were promulgated throughout the Presidency. Simultaneously all prominent Congressmen were arrested.

As direct consequence of all this, the popular demonstrations and other incidents occurred throughout the province. We give below a press note issued by the Madras Government regarding the incidents that took place on a day in August 42 :—

"The situation in the Presidency continues to be disturbed owing to rowdy elements indulging in acts of hooliganism. From a number of places reports have been received of unruly mob attacking Government offices.

"At Devacottah in Ramnad district, a determined crowd surrounded and attacked the police when they tried to prevent the Sub-Judge's Court and District Munsiff's Court from being set on fire. Inspite of repeated firings, the mob did not disperse. The District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police arrived with armed reserves who opened fire. Although the exact number of casualties is not known, six bodies have been recovered and three other persons are known to have been injured, Fifty-one rioters were arrested and the situation is now in hand. The courts were completely burnt down.

"In Madura, gangs of hooligans are still causing trouble. On Monday they threw stones at passing cars, burnt two toddy shops and looted a post office. All these incidents occurred in Periakulam.

"A report has been received from West Godavari that a mob attacked the Bhimavaram Police Station and the Police Lines, as also the record room of the Revenue Divisional Officer. The police were forced to open fire as a result of which five persons were killed.

"It is generally quiet in other districts, although there are reports of students' demonstrations in scattered places and attempts at looting in a few village in Guntur. Five Congressmen were arrested in Ambur when they attempted to organise a black-flag procession. All mills have resumed work in Coimbatore.

"Government are determined to use all the means at their disposal to put a stop to the various acts of hooliganism and rioting that have been taking place recently. Not only has extensive damage been done to Government buildings, to the telegraph and telephone services and to the railways, but the loss to private individuals must also have been very considerable. Government have already called the attention of District Magistrates, to the various powers vested in

them by the recent war-time measure and have instructed them to make the fullest use of these powers."

The above report is only an instance of such numerous reports issued by the Madras Government.

The Government of Madras, on above occurrences, adopted both legal and illegal methods of prosecution and persecution of the people. We give below the summaries of some judgments of the various courts to show the legal actions which were taken by the Government :—

Madras, December, 10th—Mr. Justice King and Mr. Justice Byers of the Madras High Court confirmed the conviction and sentence of all accused except one in the appeal in the Devakottah rioting case in which they were convicted for having set fire to Civil Courts building in Devakottah during 1942 August disturbances.

It may be recalled that 94 persons were tried by a Special Judge of Ramnad for various offences under the Defence of India Rules and Ordinance 3 of 1942. Two persons were acquitted, 26 found not guilty and the remaining 66 were convicted and sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment ranging from one to ten years. Of the 66 accused convicted 49 appealed to the High Court against their conviction.

The Lordships confirmed the conviction and sentence of 48 appellants and acquitted one on the ground that evidence against him was insufficient.

TANJORE, February, 28th 1943: Forty-one out of forty-four persons who stood charged in connection with the disturbances at Trivedi on August 13 last following a 'hartal' were convicted yesterday by a Sepecial First Class Magistrate, Tanjore, under the D. I. R. and sentenced to various terms of rigorous imprisonment.

Five were sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment, twenty-two to two years' rigorous imprisonment, nine to one year's rigorous imprisonment and four to six months' rigorous imprisonment each. Twenty-five of these were ordered a dozen stripes each in addition. One in addition to imprisonment was fined Rs. 300/- and two others were fined Rs. 200/- each in addition to two years' rigorous imprsonment.

One deaf and dumb boy aged 17 was given one year's rigorous imprisonment.

Two college students were acquitted and another was bound over for good behaviour for two years and released on his own surety of Rs. 300/- and two sureties for the like amount.

MADURA, March, 28th 1943: Of the 120 accused who stood their trial for offences under the Indian Penal Code

and the Defence of India Rules in the Thiruvannamalal Sub-treasury looting and arson cases, 64 were convicted and sentenced, four of whom to ten years' rigorous imprisonment by the Special Judge. The rest (fifty-six accused) were acquitted by the Judge.

According to the prosecution the accused formed themselves into an unlawful assembly, looted the Thiruvannamalal Sub-treasury, set free the undertrial prisoners from the Sub-Jail, and burnt down the police station and the Sub-registrar's office on August 18, 1942.

MADRAS, May, 10th : Mr. Justice Wadsworth of the Madras High Court sitting as special review judge of Ordinance cases confirmed the conviction and sentence passed on K. Balan and six others by the Special Ordinance Judge Calicut in what is known as the North Malabar Sabotage Case.

The accused were sentenced in March last to varying terms of imprisonment ranging from seven to ten years' rigorous imprisonment for offences under the Defence of India Rules, the Indian Telegraph Act and the Expolosive Substances Act.

CHENGLEPUT, May, 11th, 1943 : Judgment was delivered to-day by the Special Judge, Mr. N. D. Krishna Rawo in what is known as the Shiyali Sabotage Case.

Out of the eight accused in the case one had already been discharged and to-day Mr. T. V. Genesan Sub-Editor "Dhinameni" and Mr. Krishnamurthy Iyer were acquitted and other five convicted. Mr. M. Ramaratham Associate Editor of the "Ananda Vikatan" the first accused, was sentenced to seven years' R. I., Mr. Subbaroyan to five years' R. I. and fine of Rs. 1,000/- and the other three accused to three years' R. I. each.

The accused were charged under the Railway Act and the Explosive Substances Act with conspiracy to blow up a railway bridge near Shiyali, South Indian Railway.

COIMBATORE, May, 10th, 1943 : Delivering judgment in what is known as the Sulur Arson Case after a trial lasting more than three months, the Special Judge convicted and sentenced 40 of the accused to seven years' R. I. and two to two years' R. I. each. The remaining 46 accused were acquitted.

Marappa Gounden and 93 others, of whom six were discharged after preliminary enquiry, were in this case charged—under various sections of the Defence of India Rules and the Indian Penal Code. The prosecution stated that the accused had committed acts of sabotage and caused damage to properties.

MYSORE STATE also followed the Madras Government and the Government of India step by step. All Congress and allied Organisations were declared unlawful. All prominent Congressmen were arrested. Restrictive orders were passed against the publication of the news of the mass-movement, public meeting and procession were banned and closure of shops etc., was forbidden. As a direct consequence of all this, the people, as everywhere in the country, observed Hartal and tried to take out peaceful processions and hold public meetings and then what happened can be estimated from the Mysore Government Press Note dealing with a day's account which runs as below :—

BANGALORE, August 18th : A press note issued by the Mysore Government says, "The police were again compelled to open fire in Bangalore city this afternoon resulting in the death of five persons. Thirty-three persons were seriously injured, of whom one has since died in hospital, another is in a moribund state and two others are lying in a precarious condition.

"A shop was looted and a crowd attempted to set fire to a post office. A police party appeared on the scene with the City Magistrate, who warned the crowd to disperse. The crowd became defiant, barricaded the roads and pelted soda-water bottles at the police.

"The situation became worse as the day advanced. The roads were blocked by dust-bins and barbed wires were tied across. Compound walls were demolished and stones and brick-bats were hurled at the police. The police were stoned from all directions as also from the roofs of houses in the neighbourhood. The Assistant Superintendent of Police and his men were injured. The City Post Office, was set on fire. Several post boxes were pulled up and their contents destroyed. The crowd then broke into a police station. Fire had to be opened some six times."

A couple of judgements are cited below to show the legal actions Government took against the people :—

BANGALORE. December, 5th, 1942 : Eleven persons were sentenced to death and thirteen to transportation for life and thirteen others were acquitted by the Special Judge appointed by the Government of Mysore under the Special Criminal Courts Act to try what is known as the Issur Rioting Case.

Thirty-seven accused were challaned before the Special Judge holding court at Sagar in connection with murder and rioting in Issur village, about 200 miles from Bangalore on September 28 last, which resulted in the death of the Amildar

26

of Shikarpur and a police Sub-Inspector and injuries to several others.

BANGALORE, March 10th, 1943: Reviewing the judgment of the Special Judge of Hassan in what is known as the Sravanabelagola Rioting Case, Sir Darcy Reilly, Chief Justice, Mysore High Court reduced the sentence of transportation for life on two of the four accused to one of two years R.I.

Thirty persons were brought to trial before the Special Judge of Hassan for alleged rioting in Sravanabelagola about 110 miles from Bangalore in October last during the disturbances. The Special Judge sentenced four accused to transportation for life, 18 others to various terms ranging from two months' to two years' R. I. Six persons were acquitted while two others were discharged.

Sir Darcy Reilly, reviewing the judgment of the Special Judge, reduced the sentence of transportation for life on two of the four accused to one of two years R. I., of the 18 persons sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment four were acquitted.

The illegal and inhuman atrocities of the Government are too numerous to recount. Here still, some examples are given below:—

DEVAKOTTAH is a town in the extreme South of India. In August and September, beatings, torture, loot, arson and assaults on women by the Police and the British Military, were the order of the day in the town and several villages in its vicinity.

The terrorism and atrocities committed by the Malabar Police and by the British Military in Devakottah and other places in Ramnad District were horrible and heart-rending. Innumerable crimes were committed daily for over a month, and it became impossible for the people to live in those parts peacefully. Those who wore Khaddar were severely beaten. Many Chattiars of respectable connections were abused in vulgar language, insulted and beaten. Many young men were violently handled while in remand with the result that their finger nails were torn off. The innocent villagers, abandoning their houses and property, flew to the jungles for safety.

Police looted all the articles in the famous Saraswathi Library. They entered into a marriage house, lathi-charged the bridegroom and his party and drove them away; cooks were also beaten and driven out. The Police and the Military carried on nefarious tasks in the locality with the help of the hooligan element of the population.

On the 25th August, 1942, the wife of one Kayabu Mudaliar, in the village Andhivayal, was cruelly disgraced by the Police. On the 26th August, the Police made a search for one

Gopalakesavan ; as he was not to be found, they made his wife the victim of many barbaric atrocities, such as stripping her naked and spoiling her honour in the most cruel way in a public street by ten Policemen and then by ten Pallas, a class of untouchables. What became of the woman is not known. On the 13th September, the wife of one Muthirulappa Servai and three other women of the village of Vilankattoor were taken in a bus to Thiruvadanai, where, inside the Sub-jail they were subjected to cold-blooded atrocities. They were tied to the trees naked and their breasts were squeezed and twisted by the Pallas. Four white sergeants screwed their lathis into their private parts. Blood was flushing out, and these innocent women, unable to bear the torture, smote their heads against the walls and died. What became of their corpses nobody knows. On the 14th Sept., the above said Muthirulappa Servai, who was aged 55, was shot dead by the Police. On that day, many houses of the innocent people were set on fire and burnt to ashes. On the 15th September, one Nagadi Nagappan was tortured, mutilated and murdered. On the 29th August, the house of one Ramaswami Servai in Thiruvadanai was burnt to ashes. As he was not to be found, his two sons were arrested by the Police. The houses of Velu Servai, Muthukamakshi Pillai, Shanmugham, Kadiresa Melakkar, Avudai Odhuvar and Nagaswami Pillai were also burnt. In the villages of Kakkalathur, Kakkacheri and Muppaiyur, houses and granaries were burnt by the Police. Most of the houses in the village of Venniyur were also burnt. Three hundred Kalams of paddy were looted and the remainder burnt to ashes. The fields of one Karmegam, who was then in Burma, were looted and burnt down. His cattle too were shot ; five women of this village also suffered terribly at the hands of the Police and were disgraced. In the village of Athangudi, one Velu Thevar and two Pallas were bound hand and foot and they were shoed on their heads and the Police forced them to drink urine. Most of the houses in Kavathukudi, Monnaiyur, Thirumanaivassal and other villages were set on fire and granaries looted. Daily hundreds of innocent village-folk were brought to Karaikudi in the Police-van and were tortured. All the people in a street in the town of Devakottah were asked to quit their houses and driven out. As they were unable to carry their belongings, they were living in the vicinity under great hardship.

Mr. K. C. Neogy, in his speech in the Central Assembly, on his resolution demanding an enquiry into the alleged Military and Police excesses said :—

"When I come to Madras, I should like to read out the published resolution of the Madura Municipal Council which

was adopted on the 19th of August. In this resolution, which was passed without any dissentient voice, the Municipal Council strongly condemned the shooting of innocent persons without warning on the pretext of the curfew order. This is one typical sample which I can give regarding the atrocities committed by the Police."

In the end, the relevant extract from the speech of Mr. T. T. Krishnamachart, in the Central Assembly on the above resolution, on 12th February, 1943, is given below :—

"The acts of the police and of the Military have created such a terror in the minds of the people, made them completely silent and dumb, made them put up with all the atrocities of the local Police without complaint, and unless some relief is forthcoming, some gesture is forthcoming from the Government to the effect that they do not wish to countenance this kind of atrocities or encourage such atrocities on future occasions, the moral of the people will indeed be affected and to that extent the war effort on which every Member of this House appears to be keen will suffer.

"There are two aspects to this question, Sir, one is where there is a particular outbreak, in the act of quelling that outbreak there may be police excesses. Well, perhaps, in a case like that police excesses can be justified to a certain extent. But, Sir, there is the other aspect of the question. There is a continuous movement on the part of those in authority to terrorise people into obedience, to take reprisals against acts of sabotage from which particular localities have suffered, which people of those localities are said to have indulged in. It is this aspect which is more frightening than the first one. We, in Madras, are accustomed to police shooting in the past—in the past, unconnected with the movement that is supposed to have been launched in August last. We have had occasions when unarmed crowds have been shot down, but since, those occurrences have taken place during war time no redress of those grievances was vouchsafed to us. We were accustomed in the past to that peculiar technique which had frightened people in the past—as long back as 12 years ago when the non-co-operation movement of 1931 was in progress. But the new method of terrorism indulged in by the police for the punishment of offenders is something totally new to us. It is a fact that in Madras we did not have military firing on occasions when there were outbreaks or subsequently thereafter. We have, however, a special branch of the police called the Malabar Special Police—a police which are quasi-military, and who are so wholly kept away from the people of the country that they could be as ruthless as, if not more than, the military.

In my own province, in the district which I have the honour to represent on the floor of this House, there have been occasions when police excesses had been so great that they have terrified the people of the entire district. In Tanjore there have been instances of firing, not only in the town of Tanjore, but in Kumbakonam, in Mannargudi, and in the suburbs. And on what account? To disperse the crowd. No enquiry was made whether the firing was justifiable, because the police had always held that the prestige of the Government would suffer, that the morale of the officers who were carrying out the work of keeping the peace in the country would suffer. That has been the age long cry of British Imperialism in this country and it is still being used to-day, not withstanding the fact that we have wise and patriotic Indians on the Treasury Benches. Another instance is that of the district of Ramnad where the worst type of police atrocities have taken place. There villages were burnt.. Thatched sheds, huts were burnt during the absence of the male members of the village, and it is said that women also were molested. The matter was put before the local police officers; some of them had the decency to admit "Reprisals we have to carry out. Otherwise we cannot put down this movement." A distinguished police officer in my province has said that hooliganism must be met by hooliganism, but they would not admit that there have been occasions of molestation of women. *In the town of Madura* I have heard of a well authenticated report of *bad handling of two women.* Two women were taken away by the police, stripped off their clothes, then dressed in rags and left on an open road 12 miles away from the city, and it is said that particular action on the part of the police has evoked a reprisal from the public, the sequel to which is now a matter under the consideration of a judicial tribunal. Again, further South in Tinnevelly similar instances have occurred. Villages after villages have been looted. Thatched sheds and huts have been set fire to, and there has been no enquiry of any short. - I can take the House into my confidence and say that a very highly placed person in my own province had approached the highest authority of that province and told him "these are instances we hear. Why do not you investigate? Why do not you, when you go about, call some non-officials and find out the truth? That at least will put the fear of God in the minds of the Police." There was no response. It is not merely in these districts that I have mentioned, that such things have happened. In other districts as well, in the Andhra districts, in the Ceded Districts, in the district of Guntur, in the district of Coimbatore such acts of

terrorism have taken place, and only for the purpose of terrorising people into obedience and to prevent them from resorting to acts of sabotage which they are reported to have indulged in.

"Is that really the policy of the Government? The resolution of this Government issued after the arrest of the Congress leaders seemed to indicate that punitive action will not be taken. But what is this? This is not perhaps punitive action, then this is sheer terrorism. The result of it is, as the House will understand, that if there is a movement it will be driven underground, if there is no movement people will be hardened against the Government. And that is the feeling of the people today in my own province at any rate.

"I shall not appeal to the Treasury Benches in the name of fair play. I shall not appeal to them in the name of the standards of justice for which great nations of the world are supposed to be fighting. But I shall appeal to them this way. I shall tell those people of my own colour, people who are sons of the soil, that they have to sit up sometimes and see that some remedy is vouchsafed to their own people who are suffering, who have been stricken down by these acts of terrorism. The members of an alien bureaucracy who are not natives of this country might feel in the same way as Madame de Pompadour, after us the deluge; but people of the soil cannot afford to do so. The deluge will come and will overtake them. They have got to be here and with us, they will have to sink or swim with us in the deluge. I appeal to those wise and patriotic Indians on the Treasury Benches, pull your weight to see that something is done, some enquiry is instituted, some courage and hope is infused in those people who have been terrorised into abject obedience. In my province no meetings are possible, there is a ban everywhere, we cannot have even meetings where Gita can be expounded. The District Magistrates use the Defence of India Rules for the purpose. We cannot write to the newspapers as newspapers would not publish them. How else are we going to ventilate these grievances except in this only forum which is vouchsafed to the people of this country."

Students took prominent part in the general demonstrations. So in general they were shot dead, injured and imprisoned. Besides, how their college authorities further hit them, an example of it is given below :—

"MADRAS : It is learnt that the Principal of the Loyola College, Madras, has disposed of a number of politically-minded students by presenting them with transfer certificates after the re-opening of the college.

"Both the junior and senior students have been victimized

thus. In the case of certain students of the same college who were successful in the recent university examinations and who sought admission into higher classes, the Principal made them go to his residence several times till it was too late for them to seek admission elsewhere, only to tell them politely that they could not to be accommodated in the college on account of their political activities. More than a dozen students have been sent away thus. These students are now knocking at the bolted doors of other colleges."—

This is how the people of Madras were treated with vengeance. The British atrocities are challenging here to even the worst tyrant of the world living or dead.

BIHAR

It was one of those provinces of India which took the happenings of August, 1942, very seriously and jumped into the fire headlong. What actually was the condition of Bihar can be imagined from a Government Communique itself which was issued on Friday, 21st August, 1942. It runs as below:—

"PATNA, August 21st, 1942: Seventeen persons were killed on August 19, when a party of police and troops moving from Dumraon to Buxar in Shahabad district had to open fire on mobs who were digging up the road at various spots.

"Eighteen more were killed when a military unit moving by rail from Asansol towards Patna had to open fire several times at crowds attempting to damage the railway track.

"IN MUZAFFARPUR district serious riots took place at Katra and Minapore. At both places the police stations were destroyed. At Katra a constable was killed and a Sub-Inspector severely wounded. At Minapur a Sub-Inspector was killed.

"Fire was opened twice at Sasaram on August 14th on a mob headed by dacoits, Sixteen persons were injured.

"At Barh in Patna district, a defiant crowd had to be dispersed by firing on August 16. Two persons were killed and two injured.

"At Katras in Dhanbad Sub-division, several police officers were injured by rioters on August 16, before they could be dispersed by firing.

"In the Patna district fire had to be opened at Bikram on August 17 and at Maner the following day to disperse large mobs.

"On August 20, small crowds attempting to obstruct roads in Patna district by falling the trees and placing wires accross were dispersed by firing without casualties.

"Train communication between Patna and Gaya has now

been restored. In North Bihar, the mail service extends up to Muzaffarpur.

"By an order under the Defence of India Rules the following roads have been closed to the public for one month between the hours of 7 p.m. and 5 a.m.

"Patna City-- Bukhtiarpur- Barh - Mokameh; Bukhtiarpur-Bihar- Nawadah—Rahauli- Kodarma- Singhrawan; Nawadah-Gaya ; Patna-Digha-Dinapore-Manair-Arrah ; Patna-Dinapore ; Dinapore-Khagaul ; Arrah-Bikramganj-Sasaram ; the portion of the Grand Trunk Road from Singhrawan to Sasaram ; Gaya-Dhobi and Gaya-Sherghati".

The Government, after all this, took legal and illegal actions against the people to simply crush them. To show the legal actions against people, the judgments in some cases, only as instances, are quoted below:—

"PATNA, February 24th, 1943 : Eight persons have been sentenced to death, two to transportation for life and five to five years' rigorous imprisonment by Mr. R.B. Beevor, I.C.S., Special Judge, Patna, in the case in which two Canadian officers of the R.A.F., were murdered by a mob at Fatwa, while travelling from Delhi to Calcutta on August 10, 1942. The Officers were dragged out of the compartment, killed and their bodies thrown in the Poon-Poon river. Thirty five persons were on trial, but the Special Judge discharged three of them after the examination of prosecution witnesses was over and 17 other accused were acquitted today."

"MONGHYR, May 13th, 1943 : Syed Naqui Imam, Special Judge, Monghyr, delivered judgment today in the European Pilot Murder case and acquitted all the ten accused.

"BHAGALPUR, June 6th, 1943 : Etwari Mandal and another person were sentenced to transportation for life by the Special Judge, Bhagalpur, for lootng, burning and damaging the apparatus of Sabour Research College in August last.

Harihar Prasad, Balbhadra Mishra, Rudranand Jha and five more persons who also figured as accused in this case were acquitted."

Bihar is one of those provinces which were treated most brutally. How severely it had to suffer can be estimated from the following extract of the speech of Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Sri Narain Mehta, delivered in the Council of State on 23rd September, 1942 :—

"Speaking of the methods of putting down disturbances brings me to the tragic events in my own province of Bihar. Up to the evening of the 11th August nothing at all serious had happened anywhere in the Province. But on that fateful afternoon, in front of the Secretariat at Patna a mob that had begun to disperse was fired upon. As if this was just the

spark necessary for the movement to blaze out, events moved with incredible speed ; acts of sabotage and violence culminated in the roasting alive of some policemen and the tragic murder of a Sub-divisional magistrate. It appeared as if anarchy born of mob violence would stalk supreme. I well realize that no Government could, for a moment, tolerate such lawlessness ; but the measures taken have been such that the average citizen found himself placed in the most perilous situation, midway between the violence of the mob and the infinitely better organized violence of those who seek to assert the majesty of law. Troops and police were let loose on the countryside, and in the course of my tours in the villages, as a leader of the National War Front for my native district, I had reports made to me of oppression of the police and of the troops, of vandalism, of wanton destruction and loot of private property, of whole villages burnt, of extortion of money on threat of arrest, and in some cases, of actual physical torture. I have placed in the hands of my District Magistrate and of the Chief Secretary of my Province a statement of instances of such brutal oppression. This statement has been signed by me and by the Secretary of the District War Committee and Chairman of the District Board, perhaps the only one in India whose employees have bought war bonds of the value of nearly four lakhs. I have related to the Chief Secretary and to the Adviser to His Excellency the Governor of Bihar what these eyes of mine have seen in the villages ; all wealthy shops in the bazar looted ; entire villages burnt, not by the mob but by the soldiers and by the police, and I must confess that these sights would haunt me to my dying day. Indians in Bihar have by now been taught that there is very little difference between shooting down a pariah dog and pariah nigger. As the train I was travelling by to attend this session was passing Bamrauli aerodrome, I noticed an European in military uniform aiming a rifle at a pie dog about a hundred yards away ; he fired but missed, but those who wear the King's uniform in my part of the country are better marksmen, and they find their targets much closer."

In this very connection Mr. K. C. Neogy in his speech in the Central Assembly on 24th September, 1942, demanding enquiry into the alleged military and police excesses said :—

"This sweeping of streets appears to be a sort of special technique in putting down lawlessness because, we find this head-line in the "Searchlight" dated the 16th August, 1942 :

" 'People forced to do work of road clearing". This relates to Patna and this is what it says—'people in different

mohallas—even respectable people of high position and status—are being dragged out of their houses and forced to do the work of cleaning the obstructions on the roads. And on refusing or hesitating to obey the orders they are severely dealt with and they are even given good thrashing. This morning......'

"I particularly draw the attention of the Honourable Law Member to the following ;

" 'This morning, Babu Nawal Kishore Prasad, one of the senior members of the Patna Bar, who is the President of the District Hindu Sabha and the Vice-President of the Provincial Hindu Sabha and who is one of the very prominent and respectable citizens of the town, while out for his morning walk, on the Kademkun road, was suddenly caught hold of and ordered to clean the road'—Then—'Dr. Damodar Prasad, M.B.B.S., a well known medical practitioner of the town is reported to have been dragged out of his sick bed on the upper storey of the Central Medical Hall and taken up to the Patna Collegiate school probably for the same purpose of doing the work of cleaning and was given a severe blow on his head which caused a deep wound in his skull from which blood oozed out profusely'—Again,—'Maulvi Shakarullah, a prominent Mokhtar, also, it is reported, was dragged out of his house and given a severe blow." '

The Police excesses are even admitted by the Government of India themselves. The Home Member, Sir Reginald Maxwell, in his speech on Mr. Neogy's above referred resolution on 12th February 1943, said :—

"So far as my information goes, a number of cases against policemen are under investigation, or action has been taken, in various provinces. I have not yet got the full particulars of these cases. But, for instance, in Bihar 13 cases, involving 35 police officers, are either being inquired into at this moment or are being tried".

The following is an account from an eyewitness :—

"Shri Jaglal Chaudhry who was a Minister of the Province from 1937 to 1939, and due to his education, culture, sufferings, sacrifices, and services was so very popular could hardly be left untouched by the Government. On 9th August, he was not present at his village residence hence could not be arrested that day. When after a couple of days he returned home and was addressing a gathering on the movement and the duty of the people, out of his house, at that very time, the District Magistrate, Saran, surrounded his house with the help of the armed police and military and wanted to enter his house forcibly. His only son, a college student of B. A. Class aged about 18 years, came to the gate and

stopped the District Magistrate from entering the house as his father, whom he wanted, was not inside and there were ladies who observed Purda. He was insisting to stop them because he was apprehensive of mal-treatment and molestation of his mother and sister who were inside. He apprehended such humiliation and molestation of ladies because that was the practice of that party in these villages in those days. He somehow sent word inside to his mother and sister to go out to save their honour and they went away too. Still he being not sure of it resisted the entry of the police and military party in his house so the hard-hearted British District Magistrate ordered to fire at him and the youngman died at the spot with a bullet shot. Thereafter the party entered the house to find it vacant. Then they went to the place where Ch. Jaglal was addressing the gathering. Chaudhry was called to see the District Magistrate and he readily did so. Then he was informed of the sad death of his lovely son. But he took it very calmly in an unperturbed way. He also got himself arrested quietly and asked the people who were in a huge crowd to disperse peacefully. He accompanied the Police and Military. It was due to his influence and efforts that the Police and Military party came from there unattacked at that time. But after he was taken in custody and removed from the spot, the crowd, on learning of the cold-blood murder of the young and lovely son of Ch. Jaglal, got naturally excited. But whatever they did thereafter for that Ch. Jaglal could never be held responsible. But the thankless police and the District authorities, instead, prosecuted innocent Chaudhry Jaglal and through false and fabricated evidence, got him convicted and sentenced to 10 Years R. I. The High Court of Patna also upheld the conviction and sentence. This is the example of British justice or British brutality. Innocent, young and the only son was shot dead, father was arrested and thus mother and sister were deprived of their both male members and main support of the family, and still not satisfied at that, the innocent and breaved father was prosecuted and convicted for the acts of which he had no knowledge."

How Mr. Archer, the District Magistrate of Patna, resorted to firing on innocent and peaceful students on 11th August, at Patna is a horrible tale ! It was a peaceful procession of the College Students of Bihar and specially of Patna. They wanted to hoist the National Flag on the University Building. But they were forcibly checked by the Armed Military to do so under orders of the District Magistrate who was present at the spot. The Students were in a large number and determined to do so. When this determination was not broken from

either side, the District Magistrate called some students to permit them to hoist the flag. Thus the students' leaders were taken aside. At this very time some students tactfully climbed up the University Building and cut the string of the Union-Jack and hoisted there instead "National Flag". Just then students began returning with delight but they were fired at from behind. Students actually ran, still firing took its toll. Eight young students died at the spot as a result of firing and many were injured. One Muslim young boy, aged about 8 years was crushed to death by the hooves of the Military horses which were let loose on the dispersing crowd. Thereafter how mercilessly the injured were treated is another heart-rending tale."

About the Jail treatment in Bihar, extracts from the speech of Babu Kailash Bihari Lal of Bhagalpur, delivered in the Legislative Assembly in July 1943, on the resolution for the better treatment of prisoners, are given below :—

"Like my friend Sardar Mangal Singh, I have also had some personal experience because I am also fresh from the Jail from the province of Bihar. Before I narrate what the treatment of prisoners there is, which is the subject-matter of this resolution, I wish to begin with some personal story which is in connection with the point raised by the Home Member himself. While going through his speech I found that he said that the smallness of the number shows that persons were selected for detention with due discrimination and there was no policy of indiscriminate arrests. It is with regard to this statement that I respectfully beg to point out how indiscriminate arrests were also made. In my own case, it is a matter of public knowledge that I had left the Congress because of my difference with them on several matters and it was long before the last movement was even started. I had attended even the Budget session of 1942 and apparently the disturbance began in August of that year. So, there cannot be any reason for my arrest, and I have repeatedly asked the Government of my province and the district officials if they have got anything to show against me and whether they had any apprehension so far as I was concerned. They turned a deaf ear to all my requests. Having committed one wrong, they wanted to save their face by continuing the wrong by keeping me under detention. And whenever the question was raised, the usual plea was that provincial autonomy is a subject that cannot now be touched by the Central Government."

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: "Provincial autonomy under Section 93."

Babu Kailash Bihari Lall: "It was left to the Provincial

Government. However, I must be thankful to his Excellency the Governor of Bihar for his intervention. When he visited the jail, I narrated my story to him. He took my case into consideration and I was then released. But the question of saving the prestige of the Government again came up and I was asked to sign the so-called undertaking. Though his Excellency had intervened, the District Magistrate brought one day a typed draft of that undertaking to me which purported to have said that I have dissociated from the Congress subversive movement and that I solemnly undertake not to hold any communication with my brother Rash Behari Lall and other absconders. Both these proposals were absurd on the very face of them. I pointed this out to the District Magistrate, who was very courteous and kind, made a note of it and said that he would inform the Government. I pointed out to him that there was no proof that I associated myself with subversive movement and therefore there was no ground for me to say that I have dissociated now. As regards holding communication with my brother, he was living with me in the same jail, in the same room for the last three months. I pointed out the absurdity of asking me to say that my brother is absconding and that I will not hold any communication with him. He made note of this discrepancy and said he would inform the Government. But the beauty of the thing was that I read in the newspaper of April, 23 morning in the jail that his Excellency the Governor of Bihar has been pleased to release Babu Kailash Bihari Lall as he gave an undertaking that he dissoicated himself from the Congress subversive movement and that he would not hold communication with his brother and other absconders. In the evening I was released. So such absurd things are done. I do not know with what object.

"Now, Sir, with this background, I will give you a picture of how I was huddled in the Jail. On September 9, when I was just preparing to start for attending the Assembly, early morning two Sub-Inspectors came in a sedan car to escort me to Jail, I thought it was a mistake on the part of the police officers.

"Now, Sir, what is the position in jails? I will only mention one or two points. The trouble in the jail was with regard to the quality of food, the quantity of cloth, interviews, letters, accomodation, and so on. Over all these points my honourable friend has already said. At the rate of six annas per meal, twelve annas are being given. It can be easily imagined how in these days the prisoners in jails would fare with such low rations, and no wonder there is such a hue and cry over that. Then with regard to the quantity of cloth.

The upper class prisoners can get clothing from home, but the third division prisoners were in difficulty and they were living practically in a naked condition. The state of things about letters has been described by previous speakers and conditions remain the same. In my own case, for two months I was not allowed any interview or a letter, and no District Magistrate or any other official visitor ever visited the jail during four months of my stay there. My mental condition can easily be imagined, and it was a torture to me not to have an interview with any one. Then about lock-up. In the case of third division prisoners, I heard even recently when I came out of jail that there was some beating of the prisoners, although it was not a lathi-charge. I once had occasion to see a lathi-charge. Some political prisoners were caned in the middle of the jail and other political prisoners cried Bande Mataram and for this offence an indiscriminate lathi-charge was made and hundreds of prisoners were injured. Such things really happen but they can be avoided by sympathetic handling."

UNITED PROVINCES

After Bihar, the United Provinces had the honour of severe suffering and specially the Eastern part of the provinces. In the United Provinces, students took the most leading part in the demonstrations and their activities were firstly confined to the cities only. We give below some of the Press Reports of these activities which were issued either as the Government Communiques or allowed to be published by the Government in those days :

A communique of the U. P. Government says :—

"LUCKNOW, August 10, 42 : A crowd of students having collected near the Monkey Bridge and indulged in rowdy demonstrations, intended as a protest against the arrest of Gandhiji and other Congress leaders, the police had to open fire.

"Earlier, the police attempted to disperse the students by a mild lathi-charge to which the students replied by brickbats. Thereupon, the District Magistrate, who was present on the scene, ordered the police to open fire. None was injured by the firing, but a couple of students received injuries while they were being dispersed by the police earlier. Some police constables, as well as Rai Sahib Onkar Singh, City Deputy Superintendent of Police, received injuries. Troops had been called out and stood by near the Monkey Bridge.

"A crowd had collected at Aminuddaulah Park, but was dispersed by the Police. A crowd of students tried to form

a procession and proceed to the University, but were stopped in Hazratganj and dispersed.

"Some students were arrested during the day for breach of the order under Section 144 which had been promulgated in the city.

"Thirteen students, including eight girls, were taken into custody after the clash at the Monkey Bridge. The girl students were later let off.

"Police and military pickets have been stationed near the premises of the University.

"Twenty-six persons were arrested in Aminuddaulah Park.

"Of the injured students who were admitted to hospital, seven have been detained for treatment, others having been allowed to go after they had received medical attention.

"Another crowd of students marched towards the Secretariat from Hazratganj. When stopped by the police they collected on the road behind the Secretariat and started shouting slogans. They were eventually dispersed by the police."

"CAWNPORE: A crowd marched in the city Kotwali on Monday afternoon and raised slogans. The demonstrators threw stones at the building. The crowd, however, retreated when the police prepared to meet the situation before it took a serious turn.

"After holding a meeting students marched through Mall Road, the main thoroughfare of the city, and indulged in wild demonstrations. Some threw stones at passing cars.

"Another group of demonstrators proceeded to the railway station and attempted to enter the booking office. Slogans were raised and the window panes of the railway offices were smashed. Two arrests were made by the police and the crowd then melted away.

"As the day wore on the situation showed signs of deterioration. In the evening crowds collected at the Kotwali, Tilak Hall and Chauk Sarafa and assumed a threatening attitude. The Police chased back the crowd near the Kotwali with a lathi-charge to Chauk Sarafa, where the mob became menacing. The appeal to disperse was disregarded and stones were thrown at the police party, injuring the Deputy Superintendent of Police. The police opened fire and some persons were injured. This action had the desired effect and the crowd dispersed.

"A tense situation developed at Sirkimuhal, where an excited mob attempted to attack the police outpost and set fire to certain articles. A clash occurred between the police and the crowd and brickbats were freely used. Finding the

situation getting out of control the police had to open fire for the second time on Monday. The mob then retreated.

"Eight persons were admitted to hospital following Monday's firing and the condition of two is said to be serious.

"A disturbance also occurred in Harbansmuhal where a police party has proceeded from the city Kotwali.

"The District Magistrate of Cawnpore has prohibited for two months gatherings of more than five persons in streets, the holding of public meetings, the taking out of processions without his previous permission and the carrying or selling of weapons of any description. While armed police were posted at strategic points, troops marched through the city on Monday evening."

A press report says:—

"ALLAHABAD, August 17: The city in general continued to be quiet here today also and even those shops, which had not opened in Chowk for the last four days, opened this morning.

"It is stated, however, that on two occasions firing was resorted to by some patrols in Kydganj killing two persons and wounding one seriously.

"The curfew period tonight also was 8 p.m. to 5 a.m.

"Reports received yesterday from the rural areas showed that there were attacks on Government property at two places.

"Patrols in the district have been strengthened and railway tracks are also being guarded by military patrols".

A press note issued by the U.P. Government states:—

"Since the recent disturbances have only been sporadic in most of the districts of the province and the ordinary person has seen little or nothing of them, Government consider it advisable to publish some information of the extensive damage done by violent mobs, almost invariably led by local Congress leaders, in some eastern districts the cost of which, to the extent to which it may not be covered by collective fines, will fall on the innocent tax-payer and the inconvenience arising from which will be common to all the inhabitants of the district who had no share in the disturbances.

"His Excellency the Governor recently paid a two days' visit to the badly affacted areas of Ghazipur and Ballia, and this note gives some account of the damage which he himself saw on his tour. It should not be regarded as containing a full account of all the damage done.

"Order has now been restored in both these districts and the tehsils and police stations which were destroyed or temporarily abandoned have been reopened; conditions are in fact reverting to normal and the population are for the most part going about their lawful occupation.

"His Excellency travelled to Ghazipur and Ballia by train from Benares. In Ghazipur district a number of police stations and one tehsil were taken possession of by mobs, and at Sadata, Sub-Inspector of Police and a head-constable were burnt to death in front of the police station.

"His Excellency during his stay in Ghazipur visited Muhammadabad tehsil. The tehsil staff moved to the thana which is more easily defensible and a violent attack by a mob was repulsed with determination. But the tehsil, from which the treasury had been previously removed, was looted and burnt. The Tehsildar's quarters were looted and all his personal property destroyed ; the Munsif's quarters were also attacked. The total damage done was very considerable.

"In Ballia district even more damage was done. One tehsil, a number of police stations, some seed stores and other public places were destroyed. The houses of three Deputy Collectors and a Munsif were looted aud their private possessions including cloths, books etc., were destroyed.

"The house of a well-known private medical practitioner was also looted and his valuable stock of medicines, many of which are under present conditions irreplaceable either destroyed or taken away ; so great was the destruction that the doctor who was wounded, by the rioters could not find any iodine to put on the wound, though previously he had a large stock. Some police out-posts in the town were also destroyed.

"At Bairia the thana had to be evacuated by night when the police, after putting up a magnificent defence, ran short of ammunition. The thana building was razed to the ground. At Sikandarpur only the four outside walls of the police station are now standing and the Dak Bungalow was also damaged. His Excellency himself visited Bansdih where the tehsil had been attacked, the treasure looted and the building burnt and sacked.

"The tehsil building was a two storied building of the most modern design. Apart from burning, the floor and cement ceilings had been hacked to pieces, the stone racks for the record rooms smashed and the iron work twisted or removed.

"His Excellency also visited Sahatwar police station. This was a modern building but is now unrecognisable as such. Roofs were burnt off, walls demolished and girders removed. In fact the building looks as if it had been struck by a cyclone or earthquake."

A communique issued by the U. P. Government states :—

"It is reported that a railway station between Tundla and

Hathras was the scene of police firing on the night between August 28, and 29, when a mob of about two hundred attempted to attack on it. Nine are believed to have been killed as a result of the firing which drove the hooligans away.

"Collective fines have been imposed on certain villages in Basti and Agra districts. The situation is quiet otherwise and order is being maintained."

For all the alleged activities and doings of the people on August 9, '42, and after, they were not only severely punished on the spot by the Police-lathis, and firings etc., but were also dealt with subsequently—both legally and illegally. How indiscriminately prosecutions were launched and innocent persons were penalised even in the name of justice can be derived from the following judgements of the various courts:—

"ALLAHABAD, September 4, 1942: An application for a writ of *habeas corpus* was moved in the Allahabad High Court before the Chief Justice, on behalf of Mr. Ram Mohan Lal Agarwala, advocate of Moradabad, who is detained under Section 26 of the Defence of India Rules.

"Mr. Agarwal prayed that he be permitted to present the affidavit in person. In the course of the application the petitioner stated that usually he took no part in politics and there was nothing in the possession of provincial and local C. I. D. to show that he ever took part in subversive activities.

"That in August, 1941, the District Magistrate, Mr. G. A. Haig, demanded Rs. 20,000 from his client, Mst. Radharani, for the war fund. On her refusal to comply and pay this fabulous sum, the District Magistrate raided her house with a large number of police officials and Deputy-Collectors and removed or sealed all her gold and silver and Rs. 37,513/5/3 in cash. That, under instructions of the lady, the petitioner wired to the Governor, the Viceroy and others to intervene. Thus, the District Magistrate finding himself in hot waters, released her gold and silver and about Rs. 12,000, but retained about Rs. 22,000. He started bearing grudge against the petitioner and spoke to a deputation of respectable Hindus of his intention to "muzzle me" and to "clap me in jail." The District Magistrate, later to wrigle out of the situation, approached Messrs. Kedarnath and Saigal to create some kind of trust of the money. The lady and her brother instructed the petitioner to sue the District Magistrate as well as the trustees for the amount plus Rs. 50,000 as damages and when the petitioner was actually with Hafiz Mohd. Ibrahim, M. L. A., ex-Minister of the Local

Self-Government, negotiating with the District Magistrate and the Trustees, the petitioner was clapped in jail.

"That the petitioner under instructions from his lady client again wired to the Governor and met Sir T. Sloan and Mr. Burn in May for another assault on his client's brother by the police, he was, however, arrested in August, 1942, to avoid an ugly situation.

"That on the morning of August 12, a procession was to start in sympathy with those who were injured by the firing on August 11, the petitioner met the District Magistrate and the City Magistrate in the bazar and requested them to retire and assured them that no procession would be taken out. They, however, agreed to an alternative proposal to allow a procession in the evening. The petitioner took the responsibility of its peaceful termination and carried them peacefully through the bazar. It was tragic that some badmashes of the goonda type caused some damage to the Station Parcel and Booking Office in his absence which was condemned in his letter to the District Magistrate and also publicly.

"That the District Magistrate, evidently with a background of ill-will and prejudice mentioned above, exploited the letter and put him in jail. The District Magistrate offered to release him in September on terms which, not consistent with his self-respect, he refused to accept."

ALLAHABAD, March 10, 1943 : A reference was made by the special judge of Ghazipur. It appeared that 61 persons were tried by him on charges under sections 396 (dacoity), 436, I. P. C. (arson) and Rule 35 of the Defence of India Rules. The Special Judge upon a consideration of the evidence and circumstances acquitted 44 of them and convicted only 17. Out of these Jitan Pandey was sentenced to death, Nankhu Chamar was awarded 10 years' R. I. and the rest except Achhaibar were given seven years under all sections. No separate sentences had been passed under each count except in the case of Jitan Pandey who had been given 10 years under sec. 436, I. P. C.

In the course of his judgement upholding the convictions of 17 persons but commuting the death sentence, passed on one Jitan Pandey by the Special Judge of Ghazipur, into transportation for life in a case in which a Sub-Inspector of police, Munshi Hamid Ullah Khan, and a constable named Wali Mohammad were chased, beaten to death and then burnt by a mob during the August disturbances in 1942, Mr. Justice Ismail, the reviewing judge, observed :—

"The investigation in all these cases has been very perfunctory. We cannot blame the investigating officer

for omissions on his part in the investigation when the countryside was in a state of commotion and means of transport were non-existent for several days. The police officers were also engaged in putting down disturbances in various parts of the district. For similar reasons it was not possible to put up the accused persons for indentification within reasonable time.

"Further, his lordship said that there was no controversy about the main facts of the case. It appeared that on Aug. 15, 1942, information was given to the station officer of Saudat that a mob had collected at the seed store, close to the police station, in order to loot the grain stored there by the Agriculture Deparment. The station officer, with Ramji Raj, constable went to the store and after half an hour returned to the thana. The station officer advised the constables and other persons present at the thana to take shelter on the roof of the police station as the mob had become out of hand and was proceeding to the thana to commit acts of lawlessness. Soon after a mob consisting of 4,000 or 5,000 persons headed by Sevanand Sadhu arrived at the thana. The gate of the police station had been closed. The crowd broke open the gate and entered the compound. The S. O., Munshi Hamid Ullah Khan, came down, accompanied by a constable named Wali Mohammad, with a view to escaping from the fury of the mob. Other constables followed the example of the station officer and ran away in various directions. Before escaping the station officer had opened fire. It was not known exactly whether any person was injured or had died as a result of the firing. Before the station officer and constable Wali Mohammad could go very far they were chased by about 100 or 125 persons who attacked them and murdered them. In the meantime the thana had been set on fire. The dead body of Munshi Hamidullah Khan was tied to a rope and thrown in the fire. Wali Mohammad's body was said to have been carried by three or four persons and eventually burnt. Information was given at Saidpur P. S. and later to the Superintendent of Police at Ghazipur.

"It is a matter of common knowledge" remarked his lordship, "that about the same time several incidents of this description had occurred in various parts of the district. In the circumstances no proper investigation could be made immediately after the occurrence. A few days later with the assistance of the military several persons were arrested in connection with this as well as other incidents. Only 61 accused were prosecuted on various charges, as stated above. The crime was of a particularly serious kind and there is not the least doubt that a large number of persons participated in it.

The only point which has to be considered is whether there is sufficient evidence against individual accused to prove their participation in the offences that were committed on the day in question.

"His lordship found that only those accused had been convicted against whom there were at least two reliable witnesses. Some of the witnesses had identified several suspects correctly but had also identified undertrial prisoners who were mixed up with the suspects. Constable Izzat Husain identified a large number of persons wrongly. It was manifest that very little weight could be attached to his identification. He had, however, named 15 persons who were apparently known to him. The judge had relied on his evidence as far as the persons who were named by him were concerned. It was stated that Izzat Husain had made a report at Saidpur P. S. and had named some persons who had taken part in the dacoity. Izzat Husain himself denied that fact. The Special Judge had remarked that Izzat Husain had given evasive replies with respect to this report. The Special Judge summoned that report but none was forthcoming. It was difficult to say in these circumstances that a detailed report of the occurrence was made at the thana. It was not understood why the report was not forthcoming, if it was actually made. The Special Judge should have summoned the special and general diaries of Aug. 15 and 16 and should have examined for himself whether any report was made by Izzat Husain as alleged on behalf of the defence. At any rate, no one had been convicted on the statement of Izzat Husain alone. On occasions, like this, it was impossible to apply the ordinary standard that was required in criminal cases. The Special Judge had acquitted a number of persons against whom he found insufficient or weak evidence. He also gave benefit of doutb to those persons who gave convincing reasons for their having been falsely implicated on account of enmity or other causes.

"In his lordships' opinion the evidence against every accused who had been convicted was sufficient to warrant his conviction. The crime was a diabolical one and the participants resorted to very cruel devices in murdering the unfortunate Sub-Inspector and then setting his body on fire. His lordship, however, felt some doubt with regard to the evidence on which it had been held that Jitan Pandey took an active part in the murder of the Sub-Inspector. No witness stated that he saw Jitan Pandey inflicting any injury upon the Sub-Inspector. There was no doubt that every member of the crowd was constructively responsible for the death of the

deceased and legally might be sentenced to death, but it had not been the practice of this court to award the capital punishment in cases of constructive liability. It was fully proved that Jitan Pandey took active part in this riot. He was one of the 100 or 125 persons who chased the S. I. He was again seen among the persons who thrown the dead body in the fire. There was no direct evidence with regard to the actual assault that was made upon the Sub-Inspector. In these circumstances his lordship thought that the ends of justice would be met if Jitan Pandey was sentenced to transportation for life. In other respects his lordship saw no reason to interfere with the orders of the Special Judge. The sentences having regard to the heinousness of the crime, did not err on the side of severity".

"ALLAHABAD, March 10, 1943 : In this case Panna and Khacheru along with 14 others were tried by the Special Judge of Bulandshahr under Ordinance 11 of 1942 on charges under Secs. 147/436, 435 read with Sec. 149, I.P.C., Rule 35 of the Defence of India Rules read with Sec. 5 of the Defence of India Act and Sec. 149, I.P.C. His lordship in his judgment said that it was abundantly proved from the evidence that on the night of Aug. 21/22, 1942, a large crowd raided Charora canal inspection house and set fire to the patrol's quarters, furniture of the inspection house, and the registers and papers of the department that were found in the premises. The employees of the department who were residing in the quarters of the inspection house were forced to hand over the keys of the inspection house. As the employees yielded to the pressure of the miscreants they were not ill-treated or beaten. The mob also cut telegraph wires near the inspection house. 16 persons were eventually put on trial. The Special Judge who tried the case found the evidence of identification unsatisfactory and therefore acquitted all the accused except Panna and Khacheru. The latter was a young lad of 14 years of age. The longest term of imprisonment imposed upon him was four years under Sec. 436, the other sentences being concurrent. His lordship said he had no jurisdiction to review Khacheru's case.

"Panna was one of the mob that followed the ringleaders and did what he was ordered to do. In his lordship's judgment there was sufficient material on the record to warrant Panna's conviction on all charges. As the conviction of Panna was based chiefly on his own confession they must accept the truth of his statement according to which he played only a secondary part in the occurrence. His sentence of 10 years was reduced to five years under Sec. 436. The sentences on other charges were maintained including the sentence of five

stripes under Sec. 4, of the Enhanced Penalties Ordinance III of 1942. The sentence of whipping would be carried out in case he was found physically fit to receive it."

ALLAHABAD, April 5, 1943: An application in the nature of *habeas corpus* under Section 491, Criminal Procedure Code, filed on behalf of a student of the Benares Hindu University, Harish Chandra of Farrukhabad, who is now under detention under the Defence of India Rules, came up for hearing before a full bench consisting of the Chief Justice and Justice Varma and Yorke. The Rt. Hon. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru who had previously filed a similar application under Section 491 on behalf of a leading advocate of Banda, Kunwar Har Prasad Singh, who is also under detention, appeared as *amicus curiae* in this case, the applicant being represented by Mr. B. S. Darbari.

After hearing Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru for some time their Lordships found that all the relevant and necessary papers in the case were not available and adjourned the case till April 15. The District Magistrate of Farrukhabad was asked to explain as to why he had refused the applications for certified copies of the orders passed on bail applications.

The Government Advocate at the outset wanted to raise a preliminary objection, but the Chief Justice said that he could raise the objection after the Court heard the facts of the case from Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru said that the petitoner was a young man of the name of Harish Chandra who, a few months ago when the disturbances broke out in August last year, was reading in the Ayurvedic College of the Benares Hindu University. After the disturbances broke out, he went to stay with his uncle at Kaimganj. On November 6, he intended to proceed by train to Raipur village and he was arrested on that day under the Explosive Substances Act. He was taken to the District Jail, Fatehgarh, and about a week later, on the 13th or 14th, he was taken to the Kaimganj police station. An application for bail was moved afterwards before the Sub-divition Magistrate and he was informed that although he was arrested under the Explosive Substances Act he was being detained under Rule 129 of the D.I.R. Later an application was moved before the Sessions Judge and it was stated that he might be released on bail on any conditions which might be imposed by the District Magistrate. The Sessions Judge sent for papers, but the Prosecuting Inspector reported that the applicant had made a confessional statement and there was sufficient evidence against him and he opposed the bail application. He wrote that the papers were with the Superintendent of Police who was on tour.

Chief Justice: If the Sessions Judge had asked for the papers it was the bounded duty of the Police to put the papers before the Sessions Judge, and if I find that for no valid reason the papers were not sent I propose to haul him up.

Proceeding, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru told the court that certified copies of various orders in the case were refused to the petitioner by the District Magistrate whose order was: "I am not prepared to allow copies." The Sessions Judge fixed January 11, 1943, for hearing the bail application, but on January 9, the Police released applicant merely on a personal bond of Rs. 100 and immediately arrested him under Rule 129, D. I. R. The Sessions Judge rejected the bail application on January 11, saying that the Police had reported that the applicant had already been released on a personal bond. Another application was made to the Sessions Judge who rejected it on the ground that the applicant had been detained under Rule 129, D. I. R. On January 9, he was taken to the Kotwali where he was kept for 16 days. He was formally released under Section 129, again arrested under Section 129, released and arrested again.

At this, the Chief Justice, remarked, "The liberty of one of His Majesty's subjects is at stake and the papers are not before us. Tell the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police that every slip of paper connected with this case has to be before this court within one week. I shall not allow this sort of thing to be done. Tell them they must send every bit of paper here."

The case was adjourned till April 15. His lordship in his order said that this was an application under Section 491, Criminal Procedure Code, and the application was supported by an affidavit. Notice of the application was issued to the Government Advocate on February 1, 1943 and he had appeared today to oppose the application. A counter-affidavit has been filed on behalf of the Crown by Raza Ahmed Rizvi, Circle Inspector of Police. The facts stated in the two applications were by no means clear, and it was impossible to get from the two affidavits a comprehensive and chronological statements of facts. It was stated in the affidavit filed in support of the application that certain applications for certified copies of certain orders were made to the District Magistrate and those applications were refused. The affidavits further disclosed that the applicant was at a time arrested under Sections 4 and 5 of the Explosive Substances Act, then released and was then arrested under Rule 129, D. I. R. The dates on which the applicant was arrested either under the Explosive Substances Act or under the D. I. R.,

or the dates on which he was released did not appear from the affidavits.

In order to satisfactorily dispose of this application, said his lordship, the Chief Justice, it was necessary that all the Police papers and the various orders passed by the Magistrates together with the applications for bail should be before the court. They accordingly directed that all the relevant papers that might be in the office of the magistrates be sent to the High Court at an early date. The District Magistrate would be asked to submit an explanation as to why he had refused the applications for certified copies of the orders passed on bail applications. A copy of this order would be sent to the District Magistrate forthwith for compliance. The applicant would produce certified copies on his bail applications to the Sessions Judge and the orders passed on those applications by the learned judge."

"BENARES, May 12, 1943: Seventeen persons who were convicted and sentenced by a Special Magistrate to undergo seven year's rigorous imprisonment each and ten to fifteen stripes under Rule 35 of the Defence of India Rules for taking part in the August disturbances have been acquitted on appeal by Mr. Atma Charan, Special Judge of Benares.

Acquitting the appelants, Mr. Atma Charan observed that the Special Magistrate, who convicted the accused persons, having been appointed as a Special Magistrate by the Secretary to the Provincial Government and not by the Provincial Government itself, his judgment in this case was invalid. It was the function of the Provincial Government to appoint Special Magistrates and not that of its Secretary."

"ALLAHABAD, July 21, 1943: The fine of Rs. 500 imposed by a magistrate of Muttra on a shopkeeper, named Harinath, under Section 81 (d) (4) D. I. R., was reduced in revision to Rs. 50 by his lordship, Mr. Justice Dar. The prosecution case was that on account of sympathy with the Congress movement a hartal was observed in the city of Muttra on September 9, 1942, and the shops in business quarters were closed. In the morning the District Magistrate issued an order purporting to act under the D. I. R,, by which he directed the shopkeepers to keep their shops open for the conduct of essential business during periods of normal trading in the city of Muttra. A copy of this order was forwarded to the Kotwal with directions that it should be given immediate, wide publicity.

His lordship rejected the contention on behalf of the accused that the District Magistrate's order could only apply to those shops which were in fact open, because the order did

not direct shoopkeepers to open their shops but only to keep the shops open. In his lordship's opinion the order directed that shopkeepers should keep open their shops during the period of normal trading in the city of Muttra and there was an obligation on a shopkeeper who carried on normal trade in the city to open the shop as much as to keep it open. One could not keep open a shop unless the first opened it. The defence of the accused was that he had no personal knowledge of the order of the District Magistrate and his shop remained closed not only on account of Congress hartal but on account of his observance of the usual holiday for Amavas. It was to be regretted that there was a lacuna on this part of the case. The accused was technically guilty of the offence under the D. I. R., but as there was no direct evidence of his personal knowledge and the possibility remained that the shop was not opened on account of Amavas and not in furtherance of any hartal his lordship thought that the benefit of the doubt should be given to the accused on the question of sentence and the fine imposed upon him might be reduced. The fine was accordingly reduced to Rs. 50."

Holding the trials in July, August and September '43 to be either not legal or proper or the convictions as based on insufficient evidence or vague allegations, Mr. Harish Chandra, Sessions Judge, Allahabad, quashed the sentences of several persons convicted in connection with the last political movement, on their filing appeals after the repeal of the Special Criminal Courts Ordinance, which had taken away the right of appeal.

Some of such cases are quoted below :—

1. "The sentence of 18 months' rigorous imprisonment passed by the City Magistrate on September 7 last on Mr. Radhakishan Tewari on the charge of possessing copies of the draft resolution of the All-India Congress Committee which met here in April, 1942, has been set aside, as the Sessions Judge felt that the accused was not given suitable opportunity for defence and so, in fact, there had been no proper trial. The judge did not order a fresh trial as the appellant had already been in jail for nearly ten months.

"On the question of the A. I. C. C. resolution being a prejudicial report, the Sessions Judge observed : "Although I am not prepared to give a definite finding on the subject, there seems to be a great deal in the argument of the learned counsel for the defendant that the draft resolution of the A.I.C.C., copies of which were recovered from the house of the appellant in his absence, cannot in fact, be described as a prejudicial report. It is pointed out that although the Central Government had power under Rule 40, D.I.R., to

proscribe it as prejudicial report, the only notification issued by Government in respect of this resolution was one under Rule 41 (1) (B). Rule 40 deals specially with prejudicial reports. But for purposes of Rule 41, it is not necessary that the document should be a prejudicial report and the only action taken by the Central Government was to proscribe the publication of this resolution". However, in circumstances of this case the Judge did not consider it necessary to go into that matter further."

2. "The sentence of one year's rigorous imprisonment passed by Mr. D.C. Jain, Dy. Collector, on January 23 last on Nepal Singh was also set aside by the Judge as the documents for the possession of which he was convicted related to a period about 10 or 12 years ago and had no connection with the present movement. The Judge remarked that the contention of the appellant that the documents were not prejudicial reports was correct."

3. "The sentence of 18 months' rigorous imprisonment passed by the City Magistrate on Braj Mohan Goel on the charge of addressing His Majesty's forces to seduce them from duty was also set aside as the Judge held that the evidence on which it was based was not enough. Mr. Goel's one year's sentence on the charge under Section 52, Prisons Act, was also set aside as it was held as based on vague and indefinite allegations. But another sentence passed on Mr. Goel under the same Act for resorting to hunger-strike in jail was maintained but reduced from three months to one month's rigorous imprisonment."

4. "Shyam Upadhya's sentence of one year under Section 52, Prisons Act, was set aside as the conviction was held to be based on vague allegations and, consequently, the trial was not held to be legal".

5. "The Sessions Judge allowed the appeal and set aside the conviction of Mr. B. D. Mukherji, an Advocate, who was convicted under Rule 38 of the Defence of India Rules for shouting slogans, and remarked 'I cannot understand how what the appellant said can be said to constitute a prejudicial act. It is said that the closing of shops causes alarm and fear to the public. No doubt the closing of shops causes inconvenience to the public and interference with the normal life of the city, but I do not think that the closing of shops in honour of such leaders as Gandhiji, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who had been arrested at Bombay was likely to cause alarm or fear to the public' ".

6. "The sentence of six months' R. I. and also of a fine passed by Mr. D. G. P. Anthony on Anandilal under the Defence of India Rules for interfering with the means of

communications by blocking the Grand Trunk Road in Badhshahimandi on Aug, 13, 1942, was set aside as the evidence of a solitary witness 'of this kind', (police head constable) was not, in the judge's opinion sufficient especially when there was also a little discrepancy between his report and statement, and also because from the record it appeared that the appellant had no reasonable opportunity of defending himself."

7. "The appeals of Bachcha Lal and Sharda, who were sentenced to various terms of imprisonments, the maximum 21 month' R. I., by the same magistrate in connection with an attack made on the Muthiganj post office, on Aug. 12, 1942, were allowed as the procedure adopted by the Magistrate was considered to be most extraordinary and the judge, therefore, held that there was no proper trial of the case."

8. "Setting aside the convictions by Mr. Anthony of Bhaggu Nath for being a member of a mob that had caused violence on Aug. 12, 1942, in Katra Bazar, cut telephone and telegraph wires and stretched them across the road, the sessions judge said that in his opinion a very reasonable doubt arose in regard to the guilt of the appellant, 'It is not unlikely', the judge remarked, 'that he was quite innocent and was merely going from his shop through the crowd to his house to give medicine to his child, who was ill.' "

9. "The judge also allowed the appeals of Kailash, Durga, Jaganaeh, Govind, Nanka and Birju against their conviction by Mr. Anthony in connection with the attack on Kydganj Post Office on Aug. 12, 1942."

10. "Setting aside the sentences passed by the same Magistrate on Bengali,Munshi alias Kripa Shanker and Mullan alias Mool Narain, who were convicted in connection with the attack made on the Railway city booking office here on Aug. 12, 1942, the Sessions Judge observed that in his opinion the charge sheet as submitted in the case did not constitute a report of writing of the facts constituting an offence as required by Sec. 190, Cr. P. C. 'In the circumstances the Magistrate was not competent to take cognizance of the case and had no jurisdiction to try it'. The judge added, 'I have considered the possibility of quashing the present proceedings and suggesting that the case may be tried afresh if a report in writing of facts constituting an offence is now received from the police. But an analysis of the evidence would show that on the merits, too, the case against the appellants is extremely weak. Moreover, the appellants have been in the lock-up and jail for several months.' "

11. "The judge quashed the conviction and sentences of Ram Pratap and Mehdi Lal in connection with the attack

made by a mob on the A. R. P. report centre in Muthiganj, on Aug. 12, 1942. One of the prosecution witnesses was Mr. Taj Pal Singh (area magistrate) and for reasons given in the judgment the judge was of the opinion that his evidence did not at all improve the case against the appellants, and that on the merits they were entitled to acquittal. In this case also the judge considered the possibility of quashing the present proceedings and suggesting that the proceedings might be restarted if a proper report in writing of the facts constituting an offence was made now by the police, but he found that the evidence was extremely weak and on the merits, too, there was no case against the appellants."

12. "The conviction of Krishna Acharya under rule 56, D.I.R., Daragunj inspite of the order of the District Magistrate prohibiting processions, was set aside as the existence of the order of the District Magistrate, prohibiting processions, was not legally proved. But the appellant's conviction under rule 38, D.I.R. for shouting anti-Government slogans was upheld. The imprisonment had already been undergone by him."

13. "Holding that the evidence in the case was extremely unsatisfactory and that even that unsatisfactory evidence did not seem to implicate the appellant in any way and there could be no possible doubt as to his innocence, the judge quashed the conviction of Jairam on the charge under Sec. 17(1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act by Mr. Joti Swarup a Sub-divisional Magistrate. The appeal of Jiaram was also allowed against his conviction on charges under Sec. 17(1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act and rule 38, D.I.R., by Thakur Ram Nagina Singh, a Sub-divisional Magistrate, as the judge held that there was absolutely no case against the appellant."

14. "In the appeals arising out of the conviction of eleven persons by Khan Sahib Ashfaq Husain, a Sub-divisional Magistrate, in the case relating to an attack made on the P. W. D. Inspection house, cattle pound and post office, Saidabad, the judge acquitted Kamta, Ramswarup, Ajodhya, Ram Harakh, Raghunath, Ram Prasad, Sheodari, Nanku Singh and Maharaj Kishor as evidence against them was held to be altogether unreliable, but upheld the conviction and sentences of imprisonment, maximum 16 months' R. I., of Ramchandar and Sheomurat, reducing their fine from Rs. 200 to Rs. 50.

"With regard to the Magistrate's order regarding payment of rewards out of the fines, if realized, the Judge noted that the Magistrate had also ordered payment of a reward to the station officer under clause (b) of Sec. 24(2) of the Special Criminal Courts Ordinance, under which the case was tried.

But, the Judge said, the Section did not justify the payment of any reward to the investigating officer, for he could not in any sense be described as person giving information leading to the arrest or conviction of the accused persons.

" 'Moreover', remarked the judge, 'I do not understand what the investigating officer has done in this case to merit a reward, unless credit is given to him for attempting to prove the case against a majority of the appellants, to procure the evidence of witnesses like Nadir, Amarnath and Babu Lal (held by the judge to be valueless) and for taking a number of appellants from the jail to the police station at Handia in a lorry immediately after they had been released on bail and detaining them at Handia for some time in circumstances giving rise to reasonable suspicion that the object was to give some witnesses an opportunity to see them there'.

"The order awarding reward to the investigating officer was set aside but about the payment of rewards out of the fines, if realised, to the owners of the inspection bungalow and cattle pound and the postal department in the proportion of 1, 1 and 3 was confirmed."

ALLAHABAD, Sept. 22, 1943 : Kedar Nath and Lachhman Das appealed against their convictions by the Special Judge of Meerut, Dr. L.D. Joshi, under Sections 3 and 4 (b) of the Explosive Substances Act. They were sentenced to 10 years' R.I. under the former and seven years' R.I. under the latter Section, the sentences being concurrent.

On the promulgation of Ordinance XIX of 1943, numerous appeals against decisions of Special Judges and Special Magistrates were filed in the High Court and as in most of the appeals the validity of the Ordinance was assailed the hearing of the appeals was deferred till the decision of the question by a Full Bench, and a Full Bench had recently held that the Ordinance was valid, said his lordship. The consideration of the present appeal must, therefore, be approached on the assumption that the trial of the appellants which, culminated in the sentences passed by the Special Judge, had been held in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Code by the Sessions Judge.

The incident that led to the prosecution of the appellants took place in the Kothi of L. Piyare Lal of Hapur at about 6 a.m. on October 19, 1942. He was apparently a respectable resident of Hapur. He was an ex-Honorary Magistrate and Vice-Chairman of the Hapur Municipal Board. The evidence showed that during the disturbances of 1942 the police had to fire at a mob in Hapur on August 11 and L. Piyare Lal was with the Government Officials at the time of firing. This was resented by a certain section of people and they

suspected that he had instigated the firing. On October 10, when he was not present at his Kothi the doors were sprinkled with kerosene oil and set on fire. A report about this incident was lodged with the police. On the morning of October 19, there was a bomb explosion in the gallery of the Kothi. A number of articles were recovered from the room of the applicants and sent to the Chemical Examiner's report that traces of arsenic sulphide, potassium chlorate, sulphur and potassium nitrate were found on some of the articles.

After observing "The cardinal principle of jurisprudence that an accused is to be presumed to be innocent unless the contrary is established is the bedrock of our system. From that principle no departure is permissible or desirable. The equally important principle must be kept clearly in view that to quote the well-known observations of their lordships of the Privy Council in Atar Singh v, Thakur Singh, I.L.R. 35, Calcutta, page 1939, conjectures cannot be accepted as substitutes for proofs", his lordship the Chief Justice proceedded: "It is also necessary to take into account the circumstances which brought into being the repealed Ordinance II of 1942. Acts of incendiarism had been committed, sabotage was rampant. These are matters of which I consider I can take judicial notice, vide Probodh Chandra Chakarvarty v. Emperor A.I.R., 1933, Calcutta, page 186. To continue the narrative, telegraph wires had been cut; all means of communication between man and man came to an end. If I am bound to take judicial notice of these, the next question which falls for consideration is the nature and quantum of proof. Here again one must keep the line clear between 'legal proof' and 'moral conviction.' But once the evidence comes before the court and stands the tests of severe legal scrutiny, that evidence constitutes the legal proof. Then the dividing line vanishes. 'Legal proof' in my judgment is neither more nor less than what is indicated by the definition of the word 'proved' in Section 3 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, that is to say, 'a fact is said to be proved when after considering the matter before it the court either believes it to exist or considers the existence so probable that a prudent man ought, under the circumstances of the particular case, to act upon the supposition that it exists'. It is the duty of the court in each case to concentrate its attention on the relevant and admissible evidence and then to decide whether or not the particular fact has been proved from the evidence adduced in the case. While the court is entitled to insist that the best possible evidence should be produced no hard and fast evidence as to the quantum of evidence required for the proof of a particular fact could be laid down as this must

necessarily vary with circumstances of each case. In the case before me, the Special Judge has in the course of his judgment noticed the evidence in detail and that evidence leaves no room for doubt that the room on the upper storey from which the incriminating articles were recovered was in possession of the appellants. It is, however, argued that the evidence of those witnesses was not sufficient proof that the appellants were in possession of the room and that the articles were recovered from that room. I am unable to agree with this contention. Bearing in mind the principles that I have enunciated above, bearing in mind the nature and extent of the disturbances of 1942 and the reluctance of the people to enter the witness-box, I cannot but hold that the 'legal proof' on the record is enough to warrant the belief in the guilt of the accused not only as a matter of 'Moral conviction' but as a matter of legal deduction. I have, therefore, no hesitation in upholding the conviction of the appellants under Section 4 (b) of the Explosive Substances Act".

His lordship set aside the conviction under Section 3 holding that the evidence could not lead to the conclusion that the appellants had either planted the bomb or were responsible for the planting of the bomb in the Kothi of L. Piyare Lal. The appeal was allowed to this extent. The conviction under Section 4 (b) was maintained and to this extent the appeal was dismissed.

"ETAWAH, Dec. 22, 1943 : Mr. Shiv Baran Singh, Additional Sessions Judge, Etawah, has pronounced judgment in the well-known Basrehar Canal Kothi Burning case, in which eight accused stood charged under Rule 35 (4), D.I.R., and Sections 147 and 436 read with Section 149 I.P.C.

"Jagdish Singh, Rangi Lal, Suraj Prasad, Budhu Rai and Nawab Singh are sentenced to 7 years' R.I. and a fine of Rs. 100 each, Munshi Singh is sentenced to 5 year's R.I. and a fine of Rs. 50. Ten stripes each are awarded to Puttu Singh and Jagdish Singh, Soney Lal is acquitted."

There have been numerous political cases in the Province, in which innocent persons were implicated and convicted on very scanty and fabricated evidence. Among many such cases we refer to one of the most important cases of our province. This was as a sequel of a severe bomb-explosion at the Central Railway Station Cawnpore on 9th. Feb., 1943, at about 10 p. m., when the Delhi Mail reached the Station. As a result of this explosion three persons died at the spot, 13 others were injured and the Station property sustained a loss of about Rs. 3,000. It was discovered that a big time-bomb was placed below the stair-case of the main platform, which exploded at the fixed time. After this

incident, the Police carried out the investigation or a campaign of torture of many youngmen at Cawnpore. Finally the Police put on trial 13 youngmen in this case which came to be known as Cawnpore Station Bomb Case. After protracted trial of over a year on 10th Nov., '44, the Additional Sessions Judge Cawnpore delievered his judgment in which he held that the case was a sequel to two bomb outrages, one referred to above of the Central Railway Station and the other was of the Nishat Cinema Hall in the heart of the city, which did not cause any loss of life nor much damage to the property. The crime was considered a serious one with a political tinge. The accused were convicted under several counts, which included conspiracy, and offences under Explosive Substances Act, Arms Act and various sections of D. I. R. and I. P. C. In this case six persons were convicted and seven were acquitted by the Sessions Court. Babu Ram and Bajrang Singh were sentenced to death, Niranjan Singh was transported for life, Jagdish Dubey and Ram Gulam were sentenced to 14 years R. I. each and Dev Brat Som was sentenced to 7 years R. I. But the Police was not satisfied with this and went in appeal to the High Court against the acquittals and filed revision for the enhancement of the sentence of others. The High Court even under the changed political circumstances of the country in 1946, sentenced 6 out of the 7 acquitted young men to 7 yrs. R. I. and also enhanced the sentence of 14 yrs. R. I. of Jagdish Dubey to transportation for life. The judgment was pronounced on 15th. March 1946, and the Congress Government in the province come in office on 1st, April, '46 which released all of them soon after. The case was one in which all the convictions were based on the testimony of an unreliable and undependable evidence of an approver and the uncorroborated and retracted confessions of some of the co-accused. There was not a single eye witness of the alleged incidents, still on very scanty and weak evidence the judiciary of the country played in the hands of the Police and allowed itself to be misused to the extent of depriving liberty of so many youngmen and would have deprived them of their lives if the political circumstances were not changed in the country. Youngmen who could not be convicted would have been even hanged as many were done previously. Such cases can only be termed as pure and simple judicial murders for which we can only say that even the judges, guardian of justice, can not go above the influence of the administration in the country, which if turns atrocious on the people, the judicial courts simply become

the murder houses in place of the temple of justice.

Besides the above-quoted legal and judicial severeties and atrocities, the people were subjected to numerous other brutal and barbarous cruelties. Some instances are quoted below :—

1. The Hon'ble Pt. Hirday Nath Kunzru speaking on "Political situation in India" in the Council of State on 24th September, 1942, said :—

"I should like to give one or two instances relating to the United Provinces which seem to me to be based on accurate information. The first instance I shall refer to, relate to Allahabad. I have made some inquiries on the subject and I understand that a man was caught hold of by an Indian Soldier or the special military police because he was wearing a Gandhi cap. He was asked to take it off which he naturally refused to. His part was taken by a passer-by. Two or three soldiers came and beat the man who was wearing the Gandhi cap. He turned round on his assailants and attacked them and then finally, shaking off the person who was holding his shirt, he tried to run away. He and his supporters who also ran away were at once fired on by one of the soldiers or military police. He was not hit but a passer-by who was hit died immediately. Another instance of the same kind, I understand, occurred in Allahabad, quite near the place where the first incident occurred, but I have not been able to inquire into it. The next incident, Sir, that I shall invite the attention of the House to, relates to one of the eastern districts of the United Provinces, Ghazipur. One of the inhabitants of the village which I am going to refer to, who is a substantial zamindar, paying between Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 4,000 annually as land revenue, has made representations both to the Local and the Central Governments regarding the excesses committed by the military in his village. The village concerned is Manjha and the story which the zamindar refers to in his representation runs as follows: On the 24th August four European soldiers—I think he meant four European officers—accompanied by about 100 or 150 Indian soldiers visited the village of Manjha in Tehsil Saidpur, ordered all the males in the village to come out of their houses and stand on one side of the road. They then entered the houses, forced the women to surrender all the ornaments they had on their persons, took hold of all the cash, jewellery and other valuables they could lay their hands on and then set fire to a number of houses. Afterwards they returned to the place where the male members of the village including children

were standing. The children were asked to go away, but all the males were whipped each of them by two men, one standing on either side of the victim. One of the houses that was looted was of this zamindar who has complained to Government. He is one of the men who helped Government to put down the non-co-operation movement in 1921. He has helped them to a small extent in recruiting soldiers in the present war. He has contributed to the war fund and has been made an Honorary Magistrate. Yet he was not spared. Sir, if this is the treatment that can be meted out to a loyal supporter of the Government, one naturally shudders to think what happened to those people who were not in that position. I should not like to suggest that things of this kind have happened in every village. But I must state that so many complaints have reached me from the eastern districts of the United Provinces that I feel, and feel strongly, that the Government ought to institute an impartial inquiry into the manner in which lawlessness has been suppressed in these districts."

2. Mr. K. C. Neogy speaking on his resolution demanding an enquiry into the excesses, in the Central Assembly on 24th September, 1942, said :—

"The document to which I will refer is a notice under Section 80 of the Civil Procedure Code, which a zamindar in the district of Ghazipur has served on the Government of India and on the Government of the United Provinces, claiming damages for wanton destruction of property committed by the military and the police in his village. I have got a complete copy of the notice in my hand. He first of all gives his own pedigree of loyalty. He mentions what his grandfather did and how his services were rewarded, what is the amount of income-tax that he pays, and finally, this is not without some amount of grim humour, he reproduces a certificate that was awarded to him only in the year 1933 in recognition of his meritorious services in connection with the putting down of the civil disobedience movement. Now, the House will soon realise what has happened to him, in spite of all his faithfully and highly appreciated services. He adds that he is an Honorary Magistrate. Now, Sir, I come to the most important portion of this notice. He says :

"On the 26th August 1942, at about 3 P. M. my Manager sent a man to me and through the message of my Manager I came to know that four European soldiers accompanied by about 150 military men armed with rifles and along with the Sub-Inspector, Nandganj Police Station, came to my village in the afternoon of the 24th August and asked all the male members of my village including my Manager

and servants to leave the village and file on kutcha road, which passed through the village, on pain of being shot at. The male members including children came out of the village and sat on the kutcha road. Thereafter, the four European soldiers along with the military men entered the village leaving a few military men to guard the villagers sitting on the road. In the village the women were asked to come out of the houses on threat of being shot at should they refuse to do so. When the women came out the soldiers deprived them of all their ornaments which they were putting on their person and after that they raided the houses and looted cash, jewellery, ornaments, clock, etc. They also raided my house. The Sub-Inspector warned the European soldiers that the house belongs to an Honorary Magistrate who was a loyal British subject but the European soldiers asked the Sub-Inspector to shut up. They then looted my house and broke some of the valuable furniture and articles. That I have been put to a loss of Rs. 30,405/7/3 approximately, as detailed hereunder, on account of the acts of vandalism committed by the said soldiers.'

"I do not want to mention the details. Now comes something which, I think, would not rouse the House into any hilarity.

" 'That the soldiers removed the clothings from the houses of the villages to outside the houses and set them onfire and further, set fire to 20 houses of my tenants in addition to several straw thatched houses in the village.

'That after having looted my house and the houses of my tenants the soldiers came back on the road and asked all children below the age of 12 to go out of the line of the people sitting on the road. After this order was complied with, the adult persons sitting on the road were asked to sit like frogs after undressing themselves including my Manager. They had to obey the order on point of rifles.

" 'That, thereafter, a bamboo stick was split up into few parts and five stripes were severely inflicted on the naked back of each of the villager so sitting, including my poor Manager who was throughout protesting that he was a servant of a loyal Zamindar and of an Honorary Magistrate. The condition of all these persons has become very serious and they will make their separate representation in due course if they so desire.

" 'That one of my peons who was protesting was tied to a tree and mercilessly beaten with 30 stripes and later on taken under arrest along with three other villagers.

" 'That no public property is situated near my village and that none was injured by the residents of my village.'

"As the ornaments belonged to his wife and daughter, they too have joined in the service of notice on the Government, and perhaps they will join him in the subsequent suit. This is a typical case, and I hold in my hand a bundle of papers giving very great details regarding outrages perpetrated by the soldiers and the police in the districts of Ballia, Gorakhpur, Azamgarh and Jaunpur. These papers give a summary of the various acts of tyranny and torture which the police and the military practised on the villagers. In one paper they gave, village by village, the names.

"Before I leave the United Provinces, I should like to dwell for a few minutes on the situation in Cawnpore. Cawnpore, the House will realise, was one of the districts which were not affected by the disturbances to the same extent as the eastern districts of the United Provinces. What I am referring to is the correspondence which passed between the Merchants' Chamber of the United Provinces and the District authorities.

"Now, Sir, this is a letter addressed to the District Magistrate from the Merchant's Chamber dated the 17th August, in which they refer to indiscriminate beating, assaults and arrest of merchants made at Cawnpore, particularly in the Naraingunj market.

"There is another letter dated the 24th August in which they say:

" 'It has further come to the notice of the Chamber that people without any consideration for their respectability have been arrested, insulted and beaten in their own houses and in the absence of male members of the house, the ladies have been insulted and subjected to misbehaviour by the police.'

"Then, again, the letter from the Secretary, Hindu Sangh, Cawnpore, dated the 14th August. He says :—

' "Apart from the frequent and indiscriminate arrests, the police has resorted to breaking open the doors of houses, in the absence of male members, terrorising the women-folk and smashing and throwing all the belonging and removing the valuables of the house'.

"I should also like to refer to the statement made by Mr. Onkar Prasad Saxena, who is a Government employee, being employed in the Laboratory Office of the Ordnance Laboratories. He says :—

" 'They ran amuck in the whole house, smashed the gramophone, damaged our Radio, and hurled our utensils down on the road. Crockery, glassware, photos and E.P.N.S. calenders met the same fate, and as if it was not enough they further proceeded to abuse and kick the ladies who stood aghast, trembling with fear.........They also relieved us of our cash

amounting to Rs. 210 and jewellery worth about Rs. 1,800, a loss of roughly Rs. 5,000.......... When I had gone to lodge a report in the Collectorganj Thana the policeman there declined to write anything about it.' "

Mr. N. M. Joshi speaking on the above referred resolution of Mr. K. C. Neogy said :—

"There was an incident which has come to my notice, that had taken place in the district of Meerut. The manager of the Gandhi Ashram in Meerut went to a village called Bhanwori and some fifty or sixty people gathered round him. A police party came to the village and started bayoneting this crowd of people who were absolutely peaceful. When some people in the crowd began to retaliate against this bayonet attack, the police fired ; and again three or four people were killed. This is not the whole story. The police found that this manager of the Gandhi Ashram, whose name is Ram Sarup Sharma, was not among the killed nor even among the wounded. Therefore, one policeman said that the chief culprit has escaped and 'we must shoot him'. He was thrice shot and ultimately killed." Sardar Sant Singh, in the Central Assembly on 12th February 1943, speaking on the resolution of Mr. Neogy, cited the following facts :—

"A retired Sub-Inspector of police submitted a memorial to His Excellency the Governor of the United Provinces. Therein he says :—

" 'In spite of the fact that your Excellency's memorialist and his whole family are faithful and loyal subjects of the Government, his country house at village, Sherpur Kalan, Police Station Mahmudabad, district Ghazipur, was, along with others, burnt to ashes and all his other movable property, namely 25,000 rupees in cash, 10,000 rupees by way of gold and silver ornaments, 10,000 rupees by way of clothes and furniture, 2,000 rupees by way of damages to the house, were looted away and destroyed by the military under the direct command of the district authorities, leaving the family in utter ruin and despair.'

"Further on he says that not only the cash tempted our brave soldiers fighting against unarmed civilians but look at the mentality which prompted them to burn to ashes all the important and valuable documents, mortgage deeds—both registered and unregistered—and throw away the key of the iron safe, which they had forcibly taken away from inmates of the house, into a deep tank. May I ask if this is not a specific instance ? The date is not given in the copy, but this memorial has been submitted to the Government. May I ask the Honourable Home Member, when he gets up to give some reply on behalf of the Government which I

hope he will do—has any action so far been taken on this memorial and any inquiry made by any official and any conclusions or findings reached on it ?"

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member): "Which Memorial ?"

Sardar Sant Singh: "This memorial, which I have read, from Suraj Narayan Rai to the Governor of the United provinces.

Then there is another letter from Mr. Jagannath Rai of the same village. He says:—

"The senior Police Inspector accompanied by a posse of constables made their appearance in my village and indulged in acts of loot and pillage. None dared oppose them because the pople were assaulted, handcuffed, prodded with the butt end of the guns. Many people fell down unconscious as a result.

"Further on he said that the people killed in firing were thrown into the water, although some of the victims were still alive and could possibly have been saved on receiving proper treatment. Further on the allegation is that a woman was molested and her house was looted and set on fire afterwards. This state of things continued for two days in Arrah ahd other villages. The villagers were robbed of their property and even horses and elephants were not spared."

The following are some reliable reports from the authentic sources:—

ALMORA: There was no particular trend of movement nor there was any cohesion or uniformity. The whole movement was limited to certain localities. A few days after the general upheaval, Sult, Choukote and Masi in Ranikhet Sub-division were the main places of popular activities besides Baijnath, Someshwar and Salam, which were three other big centres of activities in the district of Almora. The movement confined itself to non-violence till it was forced to be otherwise by the excesses of the Government. Some 500 persons were convicted and about 200 ware kept under detention. The sentences were very heavy and ran upto the extent of 27 years to one Kaushal Singh. Some 20,000 rupees were collected by way of punitive tax. Fire were opened by the military in Salam, Choukote and Sult. Four persons were killed in all and some 40 were wounded.

On the night of 8th August, Mr. Madan Mohan Upadhyaya, a local Congress leader left Ranikhet for his home-village Dwarahat, thus escaped arrest. Thareafter he addressed a number of mass meetings in the villages with great zeal. Students went on strikes and people also joined with them

forming big processions and marching from village to village. Police party was running after them and trying to arrest Mr. Upadhyaya. On the 13th. Aug., after a mass meeting the police tried to arrest Mr. Upadhyaya ; but the people were in excitement and there was the danger of the police party being done to death. Hence to avoid such serious occurrence he got himself arrested as a matter of policy but in the very night he was out of the police custody with the help of the villagers in a peaceful manner. The escorting police party was blackened with tarcoal on their faces and their hands were tied on their backs. They went in this very state to the police Sub-Inspector. The people in hundreds accompanied Mr. Upadhyaya from village to village ; but these open revolutionary marches could not continue for long as the police and military under the S. D. M., Mr. Jhonson I. C. S., marched on to arrest him and such others, supressing the people of the villages one after the other. This led Mr. Upadhyaya to go underground. He had thus to pass a period of great stress, strain and risk.

The Magistrate Mr. Jhonson used all methods to suppress the people and tyrannize over them. Once at a village Sult, to disperse the crowd, he ordered firing which resulted in four deaths and eleven injured. One of the dying men refused to be bandaged by the Magistrate, another old man tried to strike a lathi blow on the Magistrate's head, but was stopped by another who took it on his hand which got broken. Another patriot was taken into Jail who died of injuries at the Jail gate.

While all this was openly done the people of villages were working remarkably well. They were to muster at a spot when the counches were blown from a top of the hill, followed by the same process from various hill tops. It was supposed to be the danger signal and all able-bodied men were to leave their homes to collect at the appointed place to face the danger. No villager ever helped the police or supplied meals to them. Once a shop-keeper, Devi Datt of the village Chanttaria was suspected of having supplied grams to the police constables, so he was surrounded by a band of revolutionary village-workers in the night and after his face being blackened he was tied to a tree for public inspection for treachery to the country.

All these arrangements or complete suspension of British rule in Kumaon were successfully organised and controlled among others by Mr. Upadhyaya, who remained underground till 19th. November, 1942, in the hills.

Once in a village Binta in Karairo he actually lived for about 20 days under the ground by making a hollow in an

open field where he remained lying for the whole day and came out in the night. For his arrest the police was vigilent and active. Every bridge was watched and arrangements were made for his arrest. The people were being tortured and harassed to give clue leading to his arrest. Under such circumstances Mr. Upadhyaya lived in temples, deserted houses and in fierce-retired jungles. He suffered a very hard and troublesome life during his absconding period in the hills. Finding it impossible to stay any longer in such hazardous and troublesome circumstances he was forced to leave the hills as a matter of dire necessity and expediency.

Thereafter, till his arrest in July, '44, Mr. Upadhyaya remained all along in Bombay where he took up the charge of publicity, propaganda and broadcasting which was taken up when the movement was dull and other activties were stopped. An English paper '9TH AUGUST' was started under editorship of Achchut Patwardhan, whereas Dr. Lohia and Mr. Upadhyaya edited 'KRANTIKARI' in Hindi. Brodcasting, which was once stopped after Gandhiji's fast, was restarted from Jan. 26, 1944. Broadcasting was done primarily, after Miss Usha Mehta's arrest, under the supervision of Mr. Upadhyaya. The papers were being distributed from one part of the country to the other and were being sent by special messengers from Bombay to Allahabad, Patna, Delhi and Calcutta where from the news of the Eastern Zone were taken to Bombay.

Bombay was then the concentration of all the absconders from U.P., C.P., Bengal and Madras. Different persons were made incharge of different places. Such absconders were employed in some or the other office to earn their livelihood were further engaged in the work of propaganda and publicity. Delhi was a place of their constant visit. These activities were continued right up to the release of Gandhiji in May, '44. Thereafter all activities of broadcasting, publicity and propaganda etc., were wouud up.

Rupees 1500/- were announced as reward for one who could get Mr. Upadhyaya arrested dead or alive. Mr. Upadhyaya was arrested on 7th July, '45 at Bombay, and was taken to the District Jail Almora after 3 years of absconding. He was informed there that he was sentenced under several counts in absentia for a total term of 13 years R. I. Later he was transferred to the District Jail, Meerut, where he remained till his release, on the advent of the Congress Ministry in the province, in the general amnesty to the politicals. Most of his colleagues of Almora who remained as absconders led the similar life till either they were arrested or their warrants

were cancelled by the Congress Ministry. Patriots of Almora played important part in 1942 and after in Kumaon and even in outside Districts.

CAWNPORE: In the city, since the 9th Aug. 1942, hartal was observed in the markets and all the colleges and schools also remained closed for the whole month. A number of peaceful processions were taken out upto the end of October, 1942, but only one public meeting was held on 9th August, and thereafter none could be held. But, of course, 46 meetings were held in the district upto 23rd Aug., '42. There were lathi-charges several times in the city resulting into severe injuries to a number of persons. Firing was resorted to some 15 times causing some 20 deaths and many injuries. In the district armed guards on the railway resorted to firing at 3 places resulting in 3 deaths and injuries to 2 persons. Throughout the month of August, 1942, the police perpetrated serious atrocities in the city. Innocent persons walking on the roads and streets were severely beaten. The shopkeepers were dragged out of their shops and beaten besides their goods in the shops were badly destroyed and their cash from the shops was taken away by the police. In the private residential houses, too, the police forcibly entered into and destroyed the ordinary goods, looted the valuables and cash. Women and children were mal-treated and males were severely beaten. Such things lasted for over a month in the city.

In the district, the police excesses reached to its extreme in Tehsil Billaur. The police in the company of Goondas and miscreants numbering upto 500, attacked one village after the other. The whole of the attacked village was completely looted and even earthen utensils were broken. The villagers were deprived of all their belonging including cash, ornaments, clothes, corn, utensils and other domestic things. In Kakwan, Police-Station, L. Ram Swarup Vaish of Visdhar village was put to a loss of Rs. 50,000/- in the police-loot and he was severely beaten while his wife was tied to a tree to witness the ghastly scene. Thereafter, he was sent to jail. In Nadiha village of this very Police-Station, 150 persons were arrested and their houses were looted. Pt. Ram Gulam Shukla, a Congress-worker of that village was set too fire after sprinkling kerosene oil on him, then a bucket-full of human-secreta was forcibly thirst into his mouth and ultimately he was so badly beaten that he remained lying almost unconscious for days together and lastly he was sent to jail. On the occasion of the loot of the village Masan in Police-Station Shivarajpur, cash amounting to Rs. 1,100/- was taken away by the police from a house. The girls also were beaten. The

police of the Police-Station, Billaur, on not finding the trace of certain persons of Baidi village, took the females of the village to the Police-Station and kept them there for 3 days without food and water. Even their children of 1 year old were kept starving and thirsty. The women were let off only when the wanted men presented themselves in the Police-Station. All these happenings were common in Gurdhara, Hasnapur, Baidi, Aulliu and Bakothi villages. Some women were forcibly raped in the Police-Station. Police attacked Baid-Alipur village thrice and looted the houses there. Village Naitānkatra in Police-Station Kakwan, was also badly looted by the police. In this Tehsil, hardly any village could escape the police-excesses. Some villages got exemption from the Police raids and loot because they voluntarily collected thousands of rupees as donation and sent the amount to the Police-Station. Such police excesses and atrocities were committed in other tehsils also. In this district about 80 cases were started out of them in 35 cases all the accused were acquitted. In other cases sentences were passed upto death.

MEERUT : On the arrest of the leaders, the whole of the city observed a complete Hartal. All the schools and colleges were closed while Katchery also appeared deserted. There were demonstrations of protest throughout the city and in the evening a mammoth meeting was held in the Town Hall on the 9th of August, 1942. The wholesale arrests of prominent Congress Workers were started throughout the District and upto the 14th of August, nearly all the prominent workers of the District were arrested. In the city students' demonstrations in protest, and the lathi-charges on them by the police were the order of the day. The city observed a complete Hartal for a week or so when forcibly shopkeepers were compelled to open their shops. The City Magistrate along with a number of Policemen toured the whole city and forced the shopkeepers to open their shops. Some of them were also punished with heavy fines and imprisonments.

The gravest tragedy of the District took place at Bhamori, a village in Sardhana Tehsil, when Pt. Ram Swarup, a worker of the local Gandhi Ashram was addressing a meeting there. The Circle Police Inspector along with a band of Police Constables reached the scene. The people were infuriated on the insulting behaviour of the Police Officer which resulted into a clash with the police who, in their turn, resorted to firing. Some 5 or 6 casualties took place of whom four succumbed to death. The worker of the Gandhi Ashram who was endeavouring to keep the people calm and quiet was not one of those injured in the first firing. Hence he was chased and shot three or four times till he died at the spot. His dead

body was mysteriously removed by the Police which was subsequently unearthed with great efforts.

At Mawana an infuriated mob attacked at Police Inspector and snatched by force his revolver but no casualty took place.

Near Mawana, a canal out-post was attacked by a mob in the night, who wanted to burn up necessary papers etc. On the refusal of the Ilaqadar to hand over the bunch of keys, the Ilaquadar was done to death and the kothi was set on fire.

From the 9th to the 17th of Aug., in the Meerut Tehsil, in many villages, papers of the Patwaries and local Primary Schools were burnt down by a mob and at some places, belts of the Chaukidars were taken. All these villages were afterwards heavily fined by the District Magistrate. There were villages where only an insignificent damage was done to the Government property but the fine was very excessive e. g., in one village only an iron nail was taken out from a tube well. This hardly cost the Government a few annas, but the fine on the village was Rs 3200/-. The special peculiarity of the fines was exemption of the Muslims everywhere.

In the whole of the August month, in Baghpat Tehsil, stations after stations were raided by mobs and two or three of them burnt. Telephone posts were pulled down every where and iron rails on S.S.R. were removed from time to time. Electric wires were also cut down. This impeded the traffic so much that for two or three days there were no trains and for days together there were no night trains.

As a result of these disturbances, four big cases were instituted by the Police. Hapur case in which about 60 persons were prosecuted out of whom only 13 were punished for various terms of imprisonment and all others were either discharged or acquitted.

In Sardhana case there were about 80 persons only a few of whom were sentenced. Mawana case had also met the same fate and Ilaqadar murder case had to be withdrawn by the Police for want of evidence. The local C.I.D. Police tried to hatch up a big conspiracy in which they tried to implicate many youngmen of the District as well as of the outside, but their efforts were of no avail.

Then Hapur, perhaps, witnessed worst form of savagery during the month of August, 1942 and the following months. There was police-raj and no pains were spared in terrorising, humiliating and finally looting the inhabitants of this small town otherwise very peaceful being a well-known grain trade centre.

Trouble began in the first week of August. In the beginning it had no political aspect and was more or less a local issue. Hapur was threatened with a virtual wheat

famine. Whatever little stock was there had been freezed by the authorities. Arrangements began to be made for its removal from here. This was naturally resented by the whole town. The people of every caste and creed were interested alike in the question of availability of food during the rest of the months of the season. When representations and arguments with the authorities failed, a representive public meeting, held on the Town Hall grounds, decided to exhibit their protest and resentment against the Government action by declaring a general Hartal. Incidentally August 9th was fixed as the Hartal Day.

News reached there early that morning from the radio that Mahatma Gandhi and other members of the Congress Working Committee were arrested. This caused excitement and the announcement of the Hartal was made with even greater vigour. While the announcement was being made some of the prominent Congress Workers were arrested under Section 129 D. I. R. No untoward incident occurred and the Hartal was an unprecendented success. A public meeting was held on the Town Hall grounds the same evening when the object of the Hartal (protest against the food grain policy of the District authorities) was explained. Arrested workers were also congratulated.

August 10th passed off uneventfully. Early next morning (i. e. August 11th) persons who had taken part in the 9th August meeting were also arrested for detention under Section 129 D. I. R. There was again excitement and some school students who happened to be present at the time of arrest decided to announce for the day's hartal. They went about doing it and again the hartal was as complete as could be imagined. This annoyed the local authorities including the S. D. M. Hapur who was also there in those days. In fact they had been unrestful since August 9th. Unfortunately the authorities decided to exhibit their full force by carrying away wheat on the 11th and they had kept in readiness a number of A. R. P. lorries. This infuriated the citizens but there was no clash anywhere although the police and the authorities were itching for one and their agents including some prominent citizens and at least one Municipal Commissioner went about saying that the authorities had decided to open fire even on slightest pretext. Subsequent event proved that the firing was preconceived and entirely uncalled for.

At about mid-day a small procession of students paraded the streets at random. When it reached the Town Hall grounds about two dozen students mostly of tender age were put under arrest. All sorts of wild rumours were let loose. At the time of these arrests all the local Police Officials were

present in the town hall. Besides a number of prominent 'raises' and hereditary loyalists were present by invitation. Some of them had been asked and they had actually brought with them a band of goondas to help the police in combating the demonstrators. When the news of the arrests of the students reached the town a huge crowd gathered under the 'neem' tree in the cloth market and they then started towards the Town Hall in the form of a peaceful procession to express their protest once again.

It was a very quiet and peaceful procession. There was only one flag in a small bamboo. People were, of course, crying national slogans. When the procession reached the Town Hall gate, a large number of policemen armed with lathis rushed out of the gate and began to make indiscriminate and brutal lathi-charge. A part of the procession was broken up and some people began to run for safety. They were stoned at by the police and the goondas who had been called for the purpose. In turn some stones were also returned by the crowd but as subsequent proceedings of the Riot case indicated no one amongst the police party or their invitees received serious injury. Only a few persons received small bruises. The lathi-charge was most uncalled for and no warning of any sort was given at any stage.

While people were running for safety the Police including the Civic Guards chased them for a long distance attacking them with lathis and throwing brickbats. But they did not stop at that. Their main object—the firing—was still to be done. When a part of the crowd perfectly peaceful did not move despite lathi attacks, they opened fire. The firing was done in all the directions, five persons died either on the spot or immediately after in the hospital. A dozen others received gun shot wounds. A very large number of persons got serious lathi injuries.

This naturally resulted in the dispersal of the crowd. Only 2 persons were arrested on the spot.

The enquiry of the case was entrusted to a Sub-Inspector, who was soon after suspended for a very heinous offence of falsely challaning persons for wire-cutting which was done at his own instance, in order to implicate those persons for the mere offence that they had agreed to give evidence for the accused challaned by the said Sub-Inspector. He accepted fat bribes and took no less than 5 months to complete the enquiry.

The result was that at first 59 persons were put on trial for rioting etc., but ultimately all were acquitted or discharged except 13 who were sentenced to 2 years R. I. by the trying Magistrate.

The firing was preconceived and uncalled for and that the police and the authorities were itching for a clash is established from the following facts. It is common knowledge that on the 11th August morning some persons who enjoyed the confidence of the authorities went about saying that the firing would take place that day without fail, to their own friends and relations. The Goondas were called for attacking the processionists. There was absolutely no occasion for firing—none of the policemen was injured seriously—no damage, whatsoever, was done to any Government or private property. The processionists were unarmed and the lathi charge was done in a very brute indiscriminate and provocative manner. It is reliably learnt that the president of the Muslim League alone protested in very clear words against the authorities' actions in calling the Goondas for police help at the spot. He also threatened to declare it from the Muslim League platform in case the authorities gave the clash any communal turn. But his was the lonely cry.

The riot had very serious repercussions on the spirits of the citizens. They were frightened and terror-stricken in the extreme due to police persecution. The Station Officer, Kishore Chand Mehta, and the Circle Inspector, Md. Yhiya, harassed the people in every possible manner. In September there were some cases of wire cutting. Merchants and Businessmen of the Mandi and the Pucca Bagh Mandi were compelled to keep night watch. They were humiliated at every step. Any one who dared to refuse was threatened to be arrested under 129 D. I. R. Money was extracted all through. A mistry of the local Hydro-Electric Office was subsequently arrested for the alleged wire cutting. He was sentenced to 7 years R. I.

Then there were two or three country made bomb explosions. The police again set to work and launched another campaign of harassment and repression. Many persons were arrested and let go by the local police after taking money. Finally two businessmen—brothers Kedar Nath and Lachman Das—were arrested for the offence of preparing country made bombs. This was a sequel to the bomb explosion in the house of L. Pyre Lal, Senior Vice Chairman of the local Municipal Board. They were tried by the Sessions Judge, Meerut, and sentenced to 17 years R. I. In appeal the High Court reduced the sentence to 7 years R. I.

The main result of these disturbances was that many innocent persons were implicated by the Police everywhere either for exacting money or for avenging the enemity of the village headman (mukhia) or the Police Officers. There were instances that when a son was required by the Police

and if he was not found, his father was arrested or if younger brother was not found, the elder one or any other member of the family was taken into custody. At Mawana, Sardhana, Hapur and some other places, the Police Sub-Inspectors earned a lot upto fifty thousand each or even more, only with these devices. The Police-Raj was rampant everywhere in its worst form.

Avowed Congressmen even the members of the D. C. C. were challaned for dacoities which in no case the Police could prove, simply because the Sub-Inspectors concerned, somehow or the other saw a good opportunity of giving a good lesson to those who always raised a cry of protest against the atrocities or injustices of the Police and the officials.

While the public spirited men were in Jail, the public at various places was forced to guard the Government buildings and Government property day and night. They were compelled to go in batches to keep watch on these buildings for fear of heavy fines, imprisonment and even misbehaviour by the Police.

During this period while the people were being mercilessly and cruelly treated outside the jails, the jail treatment was in no way better. About the best treated in jails that is the superior class detenus, a press statement of L. Ramratan Gupta, M. L. A. (Central), Joint Secretary and Treasurer of the Nationalist Party, which he issued in May 1942, is given below :—

"The public is permitted to know nothing about the life of the security prisoners in the jails of the United Provinces. Sir Maurice Hallet's Government has thoroughly succeeded in 'burying alive' (a phrse which Sir George (now Lord Lloyd) was very fond of using in connection with Mahatma Gandhi's incarceration)—thousands of men and hundreds of women behind the prison walls. We are not allowed to know anything about them. The Government of the United Provinces have not issued any official communique about the prisoners. We do not know what their lot has been during the last eight months, information has, however, trickled down through such men as have been released. Whatever we have been able to glean from these sources has convinced us that the political detenus in the United Provinces are not being treated properly. The restrictions, which have been imposed upon them, have worked havoc in many cases. The rules which are framed for regulating lives of the detenus have been changed in many respects to the utter disadvantage of the prisoners. All these changes have been brought about with the obstensible object of maintaining peace and tranquility in the Province. But in actual fact, desire for peace

has nothing to do with the changes. The pernicious principle of classification of the detenus into three divisions has been reintroduced. Is it not strange that this very Government which a year before abolished every trace of distinction between a detenu and a detenu, should have again brought in this system of classification? After all, the detenus are not prisoners in the sense in which the word is generally, and even legally, understood. They have not been convicted of any offence. They have been detained on mere suspicion, rather, on the very questionable apprehension of the local authorities that they (detenus) were about to act in a particular manner. That being the position, the U. P. Government should have treated everybody so arrested with care and humane considerations. But the Government's ways are inscrutable.

"We have been informed that the detenus in U. P. are not allowed to maintain correspondence with their friends and relatives. This is really strange. The Sind and the Bengal Governments do not find anything objectionable in permitting the security prisoners in these provinces to write and receive letters to and from their friends and relatives. But the U. P. Government would not do so. This very Government had made the rules that the security prisoners would write two and receive four letters per week, that they would have weekly interviews, that they would get daily newspapers and magazines, that they would be permitted to have writing materials, that they could supplement their food and get money deposited at the jail office for their use, that they could get their musical instruments, and that they could sleep in the open air during the six summer months, *i. e.* from the 15th of April up to the end of October. The U. P. Government once considered all these things as absolutely essential for the security prisoners. But this time the rules have been so amended that all these facilities which the detenus enjoyed before have been snatched away from them. The spirit behind these changes is not so much the maintenance of public peace and tranquility as the Government would fain have us believe.

"The rule, giving the facility of ceiling pull-fans during the summer has also been held in abeyance. All these instances clearly show that a spirit of vendetta has been at work.

"Owing to the ban placed on the security prisoners' correspondence, many of the detenus have been subjected to utterly irrational and easily avoidable agonies. Some have civil

and revenue cases against them. Others have questions of income-tax to settle. Then, again, there may be some who left their near and dear ones in the grip of serious illness at the time of their arrest. The detenus do not know *i. e.* have not been permitted to know what has happened to all such cases concerning themselves. We are informed that the ban on correspondence has operated so strictly that even when relatives and friends of detenus died, no information was allowed to be sent to the persons concerned.

"The deprivation of the right to have weekly interviews must have resulted in making the security prisoners a sort of sub-human species. This dehumanising process has now gone on for eight months. It is time that the U. P. Government stops to reconsider its attitude in this connection. We can understand the reason for anxiety of the Government to shut off detenus from the rest of the world for the first two or three months of their arrest. But a continuation of that policy is beyond our comprehension."

A press-news about the treatment of the prisoners in the Central Prison, Bareilly, is given below :—

"LUCKNOW, June 19, 1943: News has been received here from prisoners recently released that nine prominent Congressmen of U. P. confined as security prisoners in Bareilly Central Prison have addressed a letter to the Home Secretary to the Government of the United Provinces bringing to his notice cases of assaults, beatings and illegal punishments given from time to time to the detenus and D. I. R. prisoners confined there. Those who have subscribed to this letter include two ex-Ministers of U. P., the Speaker of the U. P. Assembly, and members of the Provincial Legislature.

"People who till only a few days back were inmates of the prison say that on February 16 last twelve security prisoners were so mercilessly and brutally belaboured that for days after that they could not sit up. Kicks, shoes sticks and slaps, interlarded with the foulest possible oaths, were showered upon them. Munshi Udho Narayan, a revered old man over 60 years of age, a respectable citizen of Bareilly and an ex-Honorary Magistrate was one of the batch of these victims of inhumanity in the jail.

"After this incident, another security prisoner Mr. J. P. Mishra who comes of a very respectable family, some of whose members are in high Government posts, was beaten by about a dozen convict officers so mercilessly that he bled from his mouth and head, his whole body became stiff with pain and he remained prostrate for some days. Later he was put up before the Superintendent who gave him one month's

solitary confinement and did not take any notice of Mr. Mishra's complaint about the assault, thus making himself responsible for the high-handedness of his underlings.

"There are a number of Juvenile D. I. R. prisoners in this jail, these boys have been brutally assaulted on one pretext or the other, sometimes for short work, sometimes for singing songs—a practice which jail rules specially permit. Only a few days ago they were badly beaten. One of them, Liladhar of Agra district, has been on hunger-strike for manys days and released prisoners relate that his condition was critical. Another D. I. R. convict Mr. Shiv Shanker Singh of Cawnpore District has been on hunger-strike for over a month now. Mr. Jaideva Azad of Badaun is also understood to have been severely beaten. Over and above this, he has also been given bar-fetters and solitary confinement. Kunwar Bhagwan Singh, M. L. A., of Pilibhit, whom the Government placed in "C" class is also under bar-fetters for short work.

"It is stated that the administration of the Bareilly Central Prison has gone on exactly like this for all these ten months."

A press-news about the treatment of the prisoners in the Central Prison, Bareilly, is given below :—

"BAREILLY, February, 9th 1944: The evidence was recorded by the City Magistrate, Mr. B. L. Chaturvedi, in the sensational case of Jaideva Azad, a political prisoner of Badaun, who is undergoing trial under Section 52, of the Prisons Act for having, it is alleged, refused to eat. The accused went on hunger-strike on November 26th, 1943, and only broke it on January 28th, 1944, after he was persuaded by his counsel, Mr. Mehra, who is appearing on his behalf. The trial is being held in the Central Jail Izatnagar.

"The prosecution examined Mr. Obaidullah, Jailer, as their first witness. He stated that Jaideva was undergoing his period of imprisonment of four years under Section 411, I. P. C., and Arms Act. The witness added that the prisoner went on hunger-strike and was kept on forcible feeding. He also said that ban-twisting was light labour and 300 yards would require four to six hours for an average man to work. Answering the court, the witness said that the accused was kept in separate confinement.

"The next witness was Dr. M. Uddin Faruqi, Senior Assistant Surgeon, Central Jail, who said that the weight of the prisoner had been reduced to 84 lbs. He also said that Jaideva agreed to take his meals if his grievances were removed. The prisoner's grievances, according to the witness were harsh treatment and the beating that was given to him.

Answering the court, Dr. Faruqi said that frequently

men went to him and alleged that they were beaten. If such men were admitted to hospital he recorded their injuries.

"The next witness examined was Satis Chandra M. A., a former Secretary of the District Congress Committee, who was also an inmate of the Central Prison until last year. He said that he was dragged several times for not standing before the Superintendent on his visits. Several times he was forced to stand up. He said that this rough treatment was due to the Deputy Superintendent, Mr. A. Latif. He was not given food according to schedule. He was several times on one day's fast as a protest. When cross-examined he said that jail officials said that it was a part of jail discipline even for security prisoners to get up and stand in parade but they contested this position. Mr. Satis also said: 'We were punished for this by the Inspector-General by giving me two month's solitary cells. About 50 other security prisoners got the same sentence'.

"The next witness was Munshi Udho Narain, ex-Honorary Magistrate, who was in the Central Prison till October, 1943, in detention. He said that on February 16/17, 1943, he was beaten with 11 others by warders with fists, slaps, shoes and dandas before the jail officials. He then said that he served a notice on the three Central Jail officials and he intended to file a civil suit He was given an inferior diet and milk, adulterated with water, while the vegetable had worms. He resorted to hunger-strike for 12 days owing to the beating received by him. He was also kept in solitary confinement for one month, because of his refusal to stand up on parade.

"Kr. Bhagwan Singh, M. L. A. (U. P.), a former President of the District Congress Committee, Pilibhit, and at present in detention in the Central Prison was the next witness examined, who said that he had been in the Central Prison since April, 1943 and was at present placed in "C" class. Once he was beaten by the Deputy Superintendent of the Prison with blows with his fists. He also said Jaideva was beaten in his presence.

"The next witness was Jaidev Kapoor of Hardoi, who was sentenced to life imprisonment in the Lahore Conspiracy case in 1930. He said that certain prisoners were assaulted at different times.

"The accused Jaideva Azad filed a written statement in Hindi in which he pleaded not guilty. He further said that prisoners, especially the Congress prisoners, were frequently maltreated and beaten and given insufficient and inferior food. It was his lot to get abuses daily and to be beaten on several occasions and when he found it impossible to bear this torture he had to go on hunger-strike in order to end his

life. He said that some of the jail officials were following a commonly laid out policy with regard to the Congress prisoners."

Almost similar was the treatment and lot of the political prisoners in the various jails throughout the Province.

About the treatment of the politicals in Sitapur District Jail the following account is given from the correspondence of Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth with the Commissioner, Lucknow Division :—(Raja Sahib was an ex-officio-visitor of the Sitapur District Jail but subsequently he was directed by the U.P. Government by an order dated July 28, 1943, not to visit the jail for a period of 8 months from the date of the order).

In his letter to the Commissioner of the Lucknow Division, on July 4th, 1943, Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth, the well-known Taluqdar and member of the Legislative Council of the U.P., says :

"I firmly maintain that the entire trend of the jail administration in Sitapur has created a just and widespread dissatisfaction in the jail population. Marks of injuries have been found on the persons of the prisoners for which no record of punishment has been maintained. The jail authorities have not complied with the rules as laid down in the U.P. Jail Manual of which several instances have been mentioned by me in my inspection note. Many persons, including young students, have been awarded the punishment of whipping by the Government at the instance of the Superintendent of the Jail and very many other punishments have been given in the course of a month or two since the new Superintendent has been in charge of this jail.

"Under para 821 of the Jail Manual, whipping as a jail punishment can be inflicted only for mutiny or incitement to mutiny or for serious assaults. It came to my notice during the last visit of the Board of Visitors on June 29, 1943, that whipping had been inflicted as a jail punishment on several prisoners for short work. The infliction of such punishments as whipping for short work is unwarranted and illegal exhibiting as it does the high-handed behaviour of the Jail Superintendent and the local Government.

Prisoners have been punished for making groundless complaints to visitors.

"There was a general complaint that prisoners were beaten by the jail authorities, with a view to concealing marks of injuries, they were beaten on the sole of their feet, obviously because none of these punishments can be legally recorded. It is also very curious that prisoners have been severely punished for making complaints to me or to other non-official

visitors, namely, Messrs Baij Nath Pershad Mehrotra and N.K. Mehta, who visited the jail on May 23, 1943, on the ground that they made groundless complaints under paragraph 806 of the Jail Manual. The Superintendent of the Jail admitted it to the District Judge that no evidence has been taken or recorded by the Superintendent and no inquiry was made to find out whether the complaints made by the prisoners to the non-official visitors were groundless and false. I believe the District Judge in his inspection note has also remarked that if the prisoners were to be punished merely for making complaints to the non-official visitors, without any inquiry, it only means that every time the Superintendent of the Jail can punish these prisoners by holding that the allegations made by the prisoners were groundless, as the allegations must necessarily be against the jail staff or the Superintendent."

The following are the two versions of an incident of the District Jail, Aligarh, which speak out clearly the facts as must have taken place:—

"ALIGARH, June 20, 1943: Mr. Ramesh Chandra Arya, a well-known Hindi Journalist who had been arrested here on June 15, died in Jail on June 18, under mysterious circumstances. His body was handed over to his relations in a decomposed condition. There were swellings and several marks of injury on his person.

"He was lodged in Aligarh jail on June 17. It is stated that before his arrest he was quite hale and hearty. It is understood that on the evening of June 18, he was subjected to lengthy interrogation in the jail. At midnight of the same date his body was recovered from a well inside the jail.

"The following day the deceased's relations were informed and after a post-mortem examination the body was handed over to them. The Jailor is understood to have told the relations of the deceased that he was believed to have committed suicide by jumping into the well."

(2) LUCKNOW, July 8, 1943: A Press communique says: In view of certain allegations in the Press about the death of Ramesh Chandra, a prisoner in the Aligarh Jail, his Excellency the Governor has decided to publish the following communique :—

"Ramesh Chandra was arrested on June 17, under Section 397, I.P.C., and was then in good health. The following day towards the evening he complained of dizziness and asked to be permitted to join other Congress political prisoners. The Jailor expressed his inability to permit him and he returned to his enclosure. The evening meal was distributed and shortly afterwards Ramesh Chandra disappeared.

A search was made soon after his absence was discovered and eventually his body was found in a nearby well. Artificial respiration proved unavailing. The body bore no signs of injury and there was no suspicion of foul play. The death of this prisoner was subject to magisterial inquiry and the Magistrate was satisfied that the case was one of suicide."

The jails were virtually converted into torture, persecution and murder houses of innocent and harmless political prisoners since August 1942. Police and Prison officials were trying with each other in their race of torturing and terrorising the people. The Police officials were even exposed by public trials of their wanton and inhuman murders of the innocent people. One such incident was reported from Allahabad. From the following proceedings this can be known :—

"ALLAHABAD, March 9, 1943: The magisterial inquiry was started on Monday by Mr. N.A. Abbasi, Deputy Collector, in the case arising out of the shooting incidents, which were reported to have occurred on Dec. 17 last, in Lutar village in the Meja Sub-division of this district.

"The accused in the case are Shamsuddin a Naik, and Muhammad Idris, Safdar Hussain, Ahmad Hussain and Mohammad Raza, constables, of the Special Armed Constabulary, who have been challaned by the district police, for offences under Sections 302/147/149 I.P.C., the prosecution allegation being that they caused the murders of Ram Dular, a village Bania, and his wife, Mst. Thakuri.

"One of the prosecution witnesses examined yesterday was Jagia, a village Chaukidar, who deposed that about two and half or three months ago, when he returned to his house at sunset, he learnt from the village people that a quarrel had taken place between Dular Bania and a Sipahi regarding weights. The witness said that he then went to Dular, who told him, that the Sipahi had said that the weights of Bechu Bania, Mst. Rajkali and his (Dular's) weights were short and that he would challan them. Dular added that Bechu paid Rs. 5 and Rajkali paid Rs. 14 as illegal gratification and they were let off and as he (Dular) did not pay, a quarrel arose and a Marpit took place between him and the Sipahi and he (Dular) had bitten the Sipahi on some part of his body, finger or thumb. The witness said that he asked Dular to go to Thana with him and lodge a report but he refused to go.

"Continuing the Chaukidar said that the next day he started off for the Thana and at about 9.15 a.m., he met the station officer on the way. He related the story to the station officer, who, he said, asked him to arrest the Sipahi, if he

came again, and to ask Dular to lodge a report, if he desired. The witness went back to his house and the same evening he went to Bhuska village to inquire about the incidents there.'

"At about 9-30 p.m., the Chaukidar said, he heard reports of gunfire—first one report and thereafter three or four successive reports, from the north-west side of Bhuska. He at once went to his village. Where he learnt that four or five Sipahis had come and taken away Dular, and his wife had also followed him. The witness went on and found Mst. Thakuri (Dular's wife) lying injured in the abdomen, under a mango tree. On his questioning, she told him that constables were taking away her husband under arrest, that she was following and crying for help, that the Sipahis shot her, and she did not know where they had taken away her husband. She also told him that four or five Sipahis had taken away her husband".

Further light is thrown by the High Court judgments given below :—

Differing judgments were delivered by the Chief Justice and Mr. Justice Dar in the appeal filed by five S. A. C. police, two of whom were sentenced to death and the rest to transportation for life by the Sessions Judge of Allahabad for causing the death of a villager and his wife in December, 1942.

The Chief Justice in his judgment acquitted the appellants while Mr. Justice Dar, upholding their convictions, committed the death sentence passed upon two accused to those of transportion.

Chief Justice's Judgment

"If ever there was a case in which the accused were entitled to the benefit of doubt the present was eminently a case of that descriptions", observed the Chief Justice, "Indeed but for the fact that the prosecution succeeded in the court below and my brother Dar, J., is disposed to accept the prosecution case, I would have been prepared to record a categorical finding to the effect that the case for the prosecution is untrue and the defence put forward by the defence substantially embodies the correct version of facts. It follows that the conviction of the appellants under Sections 148 and 302 I. P. C., cannot in my judgment be sustained."

The five appellants—Shamsuddin Naik, Safdar Husain Lance Naik and Mohd. Idris, Ahmad Husain and Mohd. Raza - were members of a platoon of the S. A. C. force that was posted at Nani station from October 15, 1942. The platoon at Naini was a part of the 'B' command of the 3rd Battalion

of the S. A. C., at Allahabad. Mr. H. G. Seward was the Commandant of the battalion and the commander was Daulat Singh, and he was posted with the platoon at Naini. Sadaquat Husain was the commander of the platoon at Naini. All of them figured as witnesses for the defence in the case. Seward had stated that the battalion was raised with the object of protecting parts of the railway line which had been declared strategic from the military point of view. The battalion was under the administration and disciplinary control of the I. G. of Police but was "under the army for control and command with respect to its operational duties". The army control over the battalion was exercised by the Commander, Allahabad Area.

When the disturbances broke out in the country in August, 1942, it became imperative in the interest of society at large and for the successful prosecution of the war to exercise the utmost vigilance for the protection of railway lines and telegraph wires against acts of sabotage and with this object in view the platoon was posted at Naini and was charged with the duty of patrolling the railway line between Naini and Mirzapur. On November 16, 1942, there was a derailment and it was clear that the derailment between Unchadi and Manda was an act of sabotage. The Commander of the Allahabad Area then ordered Mr. Seward to intensify patrolling between Naini and Mirzapur.

It was common ground that on the night of December 17, 1942, Dular of village Lutar was shot dead by the police between Meja Road and Unchadi station near the railway either on or close to a telegraph pole. On the same night his wife, Mst. Thakuri, was fatally wounded by rifle bullets admitted fired by the appellants in a grove. While the accused asserted that the entire incident was the outcome of an attempt by some "Congressmen" to cut telegraph wires and tamper with railway lines, the prosecution went to the length of emphasizing that not one single individual in Lutar had sympathy or connection with the Congress and the five accused abused their position and murdered two innocent and peaceful villagers. The other fact that arrested attention was that the relations between the district police and the S. A. C. left much to be desired. To use the words of the Government Advocate "there was a tussle between the two sections of police".

His lordship in an elaborate judgement covering 62 typed pages dealt with the evidence in great detail and said that the case for the defence had been uniform throughout whereas the case for the prosecution had been improved upon from

time to time according to the exigencies of the situation. What was worse was that persons who made statements favourable to the accused were terrorised and at least four of them under cover of the D. I. R. locked up in jail for more than a month. These being the facts, he had no hesitation in preferring the evidence of the defence witnesses to the testimony of the witnesses produced by the prosecution.

The fact that apart from Dulár the only other person who was killed was Dular's wife was no doubt a fact that excited suspicion, but the explanation for this coincidence was not far to seek. The residents of Lutar must have been cognizant of the fact that Dular was shot by the appellants. The residents came out in large numbers and pursued the appellants. Mst. Thakuri being bewildered must necessarily have been in the crowd and possibly ahead of many of the people and thus received the bullet wounds. His Lordship was inclined to the view that the coincidence that the two persons who happened to be husband and wife were seized by the prosecution and made the pivot of the whole show and the whole story was fabricated on the basis of this coincidence.

JUSTICE DAR'S JUDGMENT

In his judgment, covering 54 typed pages, Mr. Justice Dar said that he had anxiously considered the suggestions made on behalf of the prisoners but he could find no adequate reasons to come to the conclusion that the case was concocted or that there was any conspiracy between the villagers, the police and the railway authorities to cover up the crime of sabotage by a false charge of murder in order to implicate five innocent persons of the S. A. C. There was no reliable evidence that Dular was a Congressman or had any Congress sympathies. In his opinion the surrounding circumstances of the case were only consistent with a faked sabotage and not with a genuine sabotage. The defence story that the crowd was chased to the village, having entered the village, it came out again in an aggressive mood including women and children, that it was fired at a second time and in this firing Mst. Thakuri was killed by accident was equally unreliable. There was also great difficulty in accepting the defence story that Dular was shot when he was at a telegraph pole.

Taking the entire evidence into consideration, his Lordship came to the definite conclusion that the grove which killed Mst. Thakuri were not only fired without any justification but they were fired in circumstances in which it must have been obvious to the appellants that the firing would result in death and that the prisoners deliberately and in

cold-blood shot Dular near the telegraph pole and killed him. Despite some omissions he was satisfied that the prosecution discharged its duty both at the investigation and at the trial in a somewhat difficult case and in somewhat trying circumstances fairly and properly and the appellants had not been prejudiced in any material manner either at the investigation or at the trial. The Sessions Judge had on the whole arrived at correct conclusions and had produced an able and just judgment.

The Chief Justice who was of the view that the appellants had been wrongly convicted also agreed that even if the conviction of the appellants was affirmed, the death sentence was inappropriate.

Another case of a still worse nature occurred at the boundary of Ghaziabad (U. P.) and Delhi. The following is its Press Report:—

DELHI, July 10, 1943: Four members of the United Provinces Special Armed Constabulary who, according to their Platoon Commander, were ordered to be paid rewards for distinguishing themselves in the campaign against saboteurs, were, instead, awarded death sentences by Mr. D. Falshaw, District and Sessions Judge, Delhi, yesterday for shooting three young boys dead on the railway track near Silampur level crossing on the night of October 30.

Delivering judgment in the case, the court observed.

"All four of the assessors were of the opinion that the guilt of the accused is established and, agreeing with their opinion, I accordingly, convict Naik Ram Singh, son of Raghbir Singh, under Section 302 read with Section 109 I.P.C., Ram Singh, son of Pratap Singh, Shiv Prasad Singh and Bhagwan Singh under Section 302 I.P.C., and, in the absence of any mitigating circumstances, whatsoever, sentence all four of them to be hanged by the neck until they are dead."

The accused were given 7 days' time to file appeal against their conviction in the High Court. Discussing the arguments advanced on behalf of the defence, the Judge remarked: "The main argument on behalf of the accused was based on the improbability of the prosecution story, the chief stress being laid on the apparent absence of motive for the accused to act in the manner in which they are alleged to have acted. The theory of the prosecution appears to be that the accused shot the boys dead partly to avoid the possibility of a charge of sodomy and partly to win rewards and possible promotion for the expeditious manner in which they dealt with the gang of saboteurs. As regards the sodomy there is little evidence on the file and what little there is in the statement of Mohd. Din would appear to indicate that Shafi,

deceased, was a consenting party and the real motive for the conduct of the accused appears to be the second part as suggested by the prosecution. On this point, learned counsel for the accused relies on the statement of the Platoon Commander to the effect that no rewards have been promised beforehand to the armed constabulary for dealing with saboteurs, but at the time, it would appear to be probable that rewards and promotions were expected by the members of the constabulary, in case they distinguished themselves, and the Platoon Commander has himself stated that a reward of Rs. 50 was actually ordered to be paid to Naik Ram Singh and Rs. 20 to each of the other three for their conduct on the morning of October 31, 1942. This, of course, being before inquiry had been held and in the circumstances, although the motive appears to be inadequate for the inhuman conduct attributed to the accused, it would appear to be adequate in the eyes of the accused themselves. In any case, arguments regarding the probabilities and the adequacy of motive cease to have any force in the face of direct and circumstantial evidence that certain events actually took place."

According to the prosecution story the accused were on duty to guard the railway lines on the night of the October 30-31, 1942. They caught hold of four boys who were stealing coal on the railway line near Kishan Ganj railway station and took them towards Ghaziabad along the railway line in order to produce them before the military officers. On reaching the Silampore level crossing beyond the Jumna bridge the boys were lined up and shot at point blank range.

One boy, Mohammed Din, who managed to escape told the court that they fell at the accused's feet and begged for mercy but were fired at. Two boys dropped dead and the third staggered, Mohd. Din caught hold of him and using him as a shield fell on one side. He held his breath and pretended he was dead. Just then a goods train came which stopped because the bodies were lying on the railway track. The engine driver began talking with the accused. Seizing the opportunity Mohd. Din escaped towards a village. Later passing through unfrequented paths and swimming across the Jumna he reached his house in Delhi.

The accused told their officers at Ghaziabad the next morning that they had shot down three persons as they had smashed the lights and the gates at the level crossing.

The accused were posted on duty on the railway line between Kishenganj and Ghaziabad railway stations in order to prevent tampering with railway lines. The police and the military guarding the railway lines had authority to shoot people tampering with the railway track.

To give shelter against such cases and to avoid further prosecution and exposure of the police for their lawlessness and atrocities the U. P. Governor enacted an indemnity act. The following is the Press Note about the same :—

"LUCKNOW, April 14, 1943 : The United Provinces' Maintenance and Restoration of Order (Indemnity) Act, 1943, which seeks to indemnify servants of the Crown and other persons in respect of acts ordered or done or purporting to be ordered or done in good faith in the reasonable belief that the act was necessary for the purpose of maintaining or restoring order, has been enacted by the Governor and comes into force at once."

The statement of objects and reasons says : "In August 1942, the Congress Party launched a subversive movement designed to paralyse Government. Extensive violence and damage were perpetrated and the destruction of communications, particularly, was calculated to most seriously jeopardise the defence of India against the enemy. Although Martial Law was not declared the circumstances were similar to those in some instances by the imperative need of restoring order in the interests of the defence of India to take measures not covered by a provision of law. The Governor considers that protection should be given to such officers of Government and has accordingly enacted the United Provinces Maintenance and Restoration of Order (Indemnity) Act. 1943."

"Without prejudice to the operation of any other provisions of law for the time being in force, says the preamble, no suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding for, or on account of, or in respect of, any act ordered or done or purporting to be ordered or done by a servant of the Crown for the purpose of maintaining or restoring order in any part of the province during the period of Emergency (the period commencing on August 8, 1942, and ending today) to which this Act applies, shall be instituted in any court except with the previous sanction of the Provincial Government, and if any such proceeding has been instituted before the passing of this Act it is hereby discharged."

The individual police and other Government Officials in the province moved after innocent people as a mad hunter after his hunt. In this connection the British Officers endeavoured to surpass their ancestors and predecessors like General Neil, Havelock and Dyer etc. Mr. Hardy, the District Magistrate, Bulandshahar, toured from village to village terrorising the people by beating and looting and shooting them. He ordered indiscriminate lathi-charge on the political prisoners in the District Jail who were so badly beaten that their cries and shrieks were heard in the city. What was

done in the Eastern Districts of U.P., is beyond human power to describe. Mr. Marsh Smith and Mr. Nethersol were the two important stalwarts of the Government atrocities perpetrated in Balia, Ghazipur, Basti, Gorakhpur, Azamgarh. They moved with drunk Bilochies and burnt villages after villages and did not even allow the people to go away to save their lives, what of property. The honour of women was not spared. The innocent persons without any regard for sex or age were mercilessly treated. Even to this day Balia is a land of general torture. No person from outside is allowed to go to Balia to see the conditions of that District. Even men like Hon. Hirdaya Nath Kunzru are not allowed to go there to enquire into the doings of the Government. The white Gandhi cap is an inexcusable crime for any one to wear. If anybody entering into or even passing through the limits of Balia is seen with Gandhi Cap, he is, if he does not remove it, beaten severely by the police.

The sufferings of the United Provinces and specially of the Eastern Districts were of the extreme type. The British atrocities had their fullest display and were at par, if not more, with their doings in Bihar, C.P., and Bengal.

In Azamgarh district in Kajha State innocent persons, who assembled to celebrate a fair were made victims of indiscriminate shooting by the military. One person died on the spot.

In Madhuban Sub-Division Shri Shiv Bahadur Singh a well-known Rais of Surajpur village was subjected to looting by the military and deprived of ornaments etc., worth Rs. 32,000. His palace was brunt after sprinkling kerosene oil. The doors of the palace were closed to put to death the inmates by suffocation.

A khadi producing centre was similarly burnt. The house and the shop of Shri Radha Raman Agarwal, a wealthy man of Mhow, were reduced to ashes causing him a loss of lakhs of rupees.

On 23rd. Aug, '42, in Patwadh village the military fired on a crowd which was peaceful resulting in 3 deaths at the spot.

In Atrolia military fired to disperse public crowd resulting in the death of Shri Dev Raj Sharma of Village Kharedhi and injury to 100 others. Thus 205 houses were burnt, out of them 150 were of Madhuban Sub-Division. In this district the people suffered a loss of about 3,52,000 besides paid collective fines of Rs. 1,62,000. About 107 persons were put to death. The number of injured could not be definitely acertained. 380 persons were put to trial out of them 230 were sentenced to various terms, ranging from 6 months to life imprisonment.

In Balia, which established independent free Government for some time was subjected to severest atrocities. The account of which is beyond the pale of the pen to write. The two tyrants, namely Nethersol and Marsh Smith, started a campaign of mass canning in public besides thrusting of the lances indiscriminately. People were dragged after being tied down with the legs of elephants. Gandhi Cap was the severest crime which continued to be the receipient of severe beating wherever it was seen throughout Balia or even in its vicinity. The losses which the district suffered were 12 Lakhs collective fines, while actually realised 29 Lakhs. 105 houses were burnt causing a loss of about Rs. 38 lakhs. 406 men were killed as a result of the military and the Police firing. In Jaunpur near Dhanimau, a young student, zamindar's son, along with couple of his companions was shot dead by the military. In Bakshi Police Station two men were hanged for the whole day and in the evening were shot. Some people ran to save their lives in the ponds but were made the victims of the military bullets as soon as they raised their heads to breathe. Many persons were subjected to brutal canning and a number of houses were set on fire. Even schools were not spared. In Village Pali a youngman who was standing by the side of an absconder, Shri Kedar, was shot at and died at the spot. In this district a new method of torture was invented. It was a brutal method of castration which was termed as "Current". The person who was subjected to this torture was set up straight on the ground with stretched legs and two persons stretched his hands and one man caught his head to keep it straight then the other men caught hold of his legs and pulled them behind, resulting in oozing out of blood from his private parts resulting in his becoming impotent immediately.

In the District of Gorakhpur, in town Urba, shop-keepers were looted and beaten. In village Parsa general looting of houses was resorted. 7 houses were burnt, 10 persons were severely beaten. The burning of the houses and the looting of the villages was done in the district on a very wide scale. Huge amounts of money and ornaments were taken away from individual houses. Only in one Tehsil 12 houses were burnt to ashes. The roofs of other 103 houses were destroyed and 75 houses were looted. The losses were estimated at Rs. 2,34,979.

The worst of the savagery perpetrated in the province was the molestation and blood-boiling raping of the women. Some such instances are quoted here. In the village Rampur of district Azamgarh in the house of Chaitu Harijan, the British Military soldiers under the leadership of Hardy and

Jhonson forcibly entered and raped his young wife 20 times continuously one after the other which resulted in her death at the spot. In the same manner these white soldiers, whose parentage was never known, raped an innocent woman in village Kajah. In the district Jaunpur the Police got the women stark-naked, kept them standing with legs stretched for hours together. In district Gorakhpur the village women were molested and raped, the women remined shrieking in terror and military police accompanied by the village goondas forcibly raped them. Many of such women became senseless. All these women were of respectable homes. This incident was of village Parsa which took no part in 1942 movement. In another village Khopapar of Gorakhpur Kailashwati Devi wife of Pt. Ram Bali was dragged out of her house with the pull of her hair and then her private part was made naked. The wanton shooting, lathi-charges, whipping, looting, burning of houses and forced collections, that were made by some members of the executive and police of Gorakhpur in 1942 were so brutal, inhuman and uncalled for that they can never be forgotten and even now people shudder when they recollect the burtalities on innocent and non-violent people in these dark days. An officer ordered to open fire on those innocent and unarmed people whose only fault was that they had previously hoisted the tri-colour on the court building and were dispersing peacefully. In a short time a number of people were wounded. One Congress volunteer fell dead on the spot and three were fatally wounded, who subsequently died in the hospital and amongst the three fatally wounded, was a child about 12 years old, a student of a National Vernacular Middle School at Basantpur Dhusi, some 12 miles north of the town, who along with his school-mates had come over to this place to participate in the student-demonstration. Before the firing started some people asked him to run away and throw away the national flag, but that valiant one rebuked them and told them that he would face bullets on his chest with the emblem of liberty in his hands. It breaks one's heart to relate that Ram Chandra, for that was the name of the boy, was shot right through his chest and died the same night in the hospital.

In Gorakhpur district in Tehsil, Bansgawn, the avalanche of repression started on the 1st of September. A high police officer accompanied by a subordinate officer and three lorry full of armed and plain constables and fifty goondas arrived at the village of Kakrahi. They went first of all to the house of Pt. Ram Lakhan. The inmates were beaten, the entire property consisting of ornaments, cash, clothes

utensils and everything, was looted. Kerosene oil, forcibly snatched from the house of a neighbouring Teli, was then sprinkled over the whole house which was then set on fire. Villagers were strictly forbidden, on pain of death, to put out the fire. The fire was only put out, after the police had departed, to prevent other houses from catching fire. The house was burnt to cinders and nothing remained even as a trace. The whole house of Lal Narain Chand, of Gopalpura had been looted and the entire property consisting of all kinds of movables from ornaments to utensils, worth about Rs. 35,000 was taken away by the police. The ladies of the house fled away from the house and concealed themselves in gutters and canefields for fear that the 14 years old daughter of the Lal Saheb might be molested.

They carried away with them Lal Saheb's son, barely 11 months old, and the child drenched with rain and famished for want of milk made its exit from the world in just two days. Lal Saheb's brother, Lal Raj Bahadur Chand had been arrested a day earlier and he was kept in detention for two years, although he had never been in politics.

In the village of Gopalpura, a Congressman, Sj. Keshbardhan Rai was arrested. His house was looted and brunt and even his parents were arrested. In the same village the police caught hold of a person Mr. Ram Narain Rai and asked him to shout "Government ki Jai." He shouted instead "Gandhiji ki Jai" and he was rewarded with lathis and cane stripes. Similarly a boy Ram Chandra aged only 15 was flogged for refusing to shout "Government ki Jai."

In the village of Khonapapar Sm. Kailashwati Devi wife of a well-known Congress worker, Pt. Ram Bal Misra, was interrogated about the boys who visited her place, on failing to furnish any information under the orders of the Thanedar, the Goondas tore away her Sari and dragged her by the lock. The village school was brunt and along with it all the charkhas and the collection of books, numbering more than a thousand.

Tandi was the scene of the worst repression. Here the police officer arrived with the usual armed constables and goondas. Here some houses were burnt, every house, without exception was looted and what is more the females were gagged and then raped. The police here attempted to snatch away a neck-ring from the neck of a small girl, Ram Dei, aged 10 years, and when she protested, they hurled a lance at her, making a deep wound below her right eye. The important to note is that in this village there was not a single

Congress member and still arson, loot, rape and flogging were the order of the day.

At Uruabazar the villagers were bound with ropes and dragged to a certain bungalow where they remained confined and they were released only after ransom money had been paid to the police. Here Ram Adhar Singh received serious injuries from beating by the police. Malibari village in Deoria Tehsil was the scene of incendiarism and loot by the military who had specially detrained here for the purpose. Here villagers were tied with ropes and pushed into a pond. One Jasa Chamar received bullet wounds and Sheo Vrat Rai was assaulted by lathis and died on the spot.

At Deoghat near Bhatni, a firing squad shot down Bhajal Mian and Ram Lagan Teli, also property worth Rs. 40,000 was looted from the house of Ram Kant Mishra. The total damages of Tehsil Bansgaon amount to more than a lakh of rupees, and the villages most affected are: Kakrhi, Gola, Gopalpura, Janipur, Dhamusa, Madaria, Konihri, Dei Dit Uruabazar, Tandi and Parsa.

BASTI: During the August days Gaura Station, in the district of Basti, witnessed a minor disturbance. Telegraph wires were cut, cash amounting Rs. 10/8 was looted, the station building tampered with, and grain meant for the military contained in a wagon was taken away by the people. This is the whole official story of disturbance at Gaura. But the reprisal was fierce. Five villages near the station, in the polling circle Babhnan, were set on fire. Six villages, Dubha, Barhaya, Itbahara, Ranipur, Gaur and Sardaha were looted. The womenfolk were robbed of their ornaments and people were tortured for months together. More than two hundred people were arrested in the vicinity but later on a case was instituted against the following nine persons only:—

Sjs. Jhinkoo Singh, Bhadeshwar Singh, Sita Ram Singh, Raja Ram Singh, Raj Mani, Suraj Prasad Shukla, Jai Baksh Singh, Bhagwan Singh and Ram Bali Singh.

The tenth Pandit Suraj Prasad Tewari, the declared leader of the case, was all long an absconder. He crossed the frontier of Nepal. On recrossing the frontier to Basti the police made a bid to arrest him but he fought back his way to Nepal again. He was, however, seriously wounded in the action and the police brought him back from Nepal. Pandit Suraj Prasad Tewari was a Siradar of the Qaumi Seva Dal of Babhnan Mandal and during the period he was an absconder, his house was looted seven times.

Sj. Bhadeshwar Singh, another accused in the case is a Malguzar of village Itbahara, paying a land revenue of Rs. 2,000 per annum. His property worth more than Rs. 2,000

was auctioned for the small sum of Rs. 400 and the bid was made by a police officer His womenfolk were beaten and then stripped naked. He is at present undergoing imprisonment for 7 years' R.I.

The womenfolk of Jhinkoo Singh, still another accused in the case, were made to stand the whole day in the sun and not only were they deprived of their ornaments but were relieved also of their utensils. The terror prevailing in the vicinity was so great that the family of Bhadeshwar Singh, whose utensils had also been taken away, did not buy any fresh utensils, although they had the means, and cooked their meals in earthen pots for fear that the police might raid again.

Elephants were made to trample under foot the standing crop at Gaur and the portion of it that was ripe, was given away as booty to the chowkidar and other village officials.

In the Khetwal Mandal, Sj. Ram Baran Yadava, a member of the District Congress Committee, was arrested in his village and taken to Railway Station Shoharatgrah on an elephant. In all the intervening villages, the villagers were asked to kick him, and whosoever refused was himself beaten by the police.

At Walterganj, in the villages Baheria, Bharauli, and Belhara, some houses were set on fire, some property was looted, people beaten and some even flogged. About forty persons were arrested, out of whom only eleven were sentenced and of whom the sentences of seven have already been remitted.

At Barhin Mandal, in the village of Imila, near Railway Station Parsa, the house of Pt. Beni Mādhava was set on fire, his property was looted, his whole family was detained in the station yard for days together and his old father aged 70 given a sound thrashing. The only occurrence here was the cutting of a telegraph wire in the vicinity. Here again Kotwal Singh's house was set on fire and his cattle auctioned without any notice or even a record.

The house of one of the secretaries of the Basti D. C. C., Sj. Lalta Prasad, was set on fire and his property looted. This was at Menhdawai in the Tehsil of Khalilabad.

In Kalwari Mandal, a village Patwari's papers were burnt. The sequel was that the people of seven or eight villages were beaten, and the eight-year-old son of one Sj. Bhusi Singh was kidnapped. The boy still remains untraced and the father undergoing a sentence of three years' rigorous imprisonment.

The village of Sardaha was set on fire. The villagers who collected together were fired upon by the police wounding a schoolboy.

At Basti proper, a students' procession was lathi-charged and the office of the D. C. C. was set on fire.

The atrocities perpetrated in the Eastern districts of U. P. were also witnessed in the other parts of the Province. The old capital of the province and the home of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, Allahabad, had also undergone the same shorts of sufferings.

After the arrest of the leaders in Bombay on August 9, Allahabad, like many other cities, was greatly excited at the unprovoked attack on them. On august 12, a procession of students marched towards kutchery and the panicky administrators of peace lost their nerve. The police threw brick-bats on the procession, and then trouble began. The tension grew. According to the officers on the sopt, there was no need for the firing that followed. Shooting began under the orders of the City Deputy Superintendent of Police, who had no business to give such order in the presence of the District Magistrate.

A bullet went through the chest of Lal Padmadhar, a student of the Allahabad University, and he died. Girls and boys coloured their hands with the blood of the martyr and marched ahead. Bullets could not terrify the students and they did not leave the place.

Real trouble began in Allahabad with the death of Lal Padmadhar. Police and military were posted all over the city. Martial law prevailed. Innocent persons passing on roads were shot dead and their bodies dragged aside, and taken to some hospital at convenience.

A dhobi who happened to wear a Gandhi cap was shot dead by a member of the S. A. C. from a moving lorry which passed along the road where the dhobi was taking rest. These S.A.C. men beasts of the bureaucracy, enjoyed similar "sport" all over the province and indulged in all naked barbarities. According to the information available, a grass-cutter also met the same fate as that of the dhobi on another road.

The bravery of Ramesh Malviya, a young student, who fell fighting defending the honour of the national flag, will long remain a proud memory. When a crowd of men was being fired at, Ramesh continued shouting—"March ahead". This was too much for some Baluchi soldiers. One of them fired at Ramesh. He died bleeding on the spot. These brutes killed several other persons in Allahabad without provocation.

The death of Murari Mohan Bhattacharya was a most cruel instance of military shooting in Allahabad. He wanted to cross the road in Johnstongunj. He was stopped and was ordered to go back. He obeyed the order, but that was not

enough. He was shot in the back and he lay dead in a pool of his own blood. A number of men were killed in Allahabad.

Allahabad was at the mercy of the police and Military for a long time. They did what they liked. The Deputy Superintendent of Police for over a year remained the Nadir-shah of the city and a wave of terror swept over it. The lock-up of the police Kotwali was miniature "Red Fort", where Bhaiji, a Congress worker, was beaten so mercilessly that he passed blood. When he went to Jail from the lock-up, he narrated the whole story. Third degree methods were used in the Kotwali in dealing wtih Congressmen. Well-known persons were taken there and beaten with shoes and canes. The police officer used to abuse publicly the Congress leaders and he ill-treated Rai Ram Charan Agarwal, a premier rais of Allahabad, and many others. The local police chased and haunted students in the hostels and the university and humiliated them. One day, they invaded the university and attacked the students with batons and hounded them out of the compound. All this happened in the presence of the University Authorities. For a long time Allahabad was under the Police Raj. Policemen mercilessly extracted money, arrested anyone they liked, looted any home they chose, thrashed any body they pleased; Gambling dens were promoted for the prosperity of the police. It was for all such things that Governor Hallett had been so profusely praising them in his parades and durbars.

The above are merely the instances and not enumeration in full of the British Savagery in U. P. under the regime of Hallet who was vying in feroucity and atrocity with the worst of tyrants in the history of the world.

OTHER PROVINCES

The British savagery was experienced and exhibited throughout the country, of course, somewhere it was more and somewhere comparatively less but the policy of the Government was practically the same everywhere except some discretion was used by the local and provincial Governments. We give below in brief some account of the rest of the provinces of India :—

ORISSA

This small province was subjected to no less severe and atrocious actions by the Government. Convictions, fines, lathi-charges, firing and beating were done all in common. The number of detenus in the province amounted to 399 and convictions under D. I. R. and other law totalled 1337

according to an official statement made on May 11, 1943. Besides this lathi-charge and beating was done in the jails.

In the Orissa Assembly on Wednesday, March 17, 1943, replying to a question by Srimati Sarla Devi, Maulvi Sobhan Khan stated that a detachmet of armed reserve was taken to the District Jail at Berhampur on November 15 last, and made a short lathi-charge on the political prisoners who sustained injuries of a simple nature on their persons. This was done as the prisoners became unruly.

In district Balasor, after August 8, 1942, police started an atrocious rule. The firing was done at various places. In these firings 42 persons were killed and 270 were injured. The women, after guilts of their husbands and sons, were molested. They were made naked and hung on the trees, up side down. At various parts of their bodies they were whipped and canned besides being tortured in various other ways. They were being tortured even after they became senseless. Innocent women were deprived of their ornaments.

In Korapur, the fields, cattle, houses and other property of the Congressmen were forfeited. Many Congressmen were made naked and badly tortured. Even ladies were brutally behaved. The property of the Congress which included a car and Rs. 2,000 cash were forfeited.

Congress leader Lakshman Niak, while addressing a public meeting in village Maithili was arrested and taken to the police station. The huge crowd of the people accompanied him. While the crowd was returning the police charged them with lathis and firing, resulting into death of six persons and injury to 100. Lakshman Niak was attacked with spears and bayonets. In these inhuman treatments an innocent child of 4 years was killed. The officials of the Jaipur state who were present at that spot helped the police. A forest guard who was deadly drunk fell down in Canal near by and died. After 8 or 10 days of this incident the Collector and Superintendent Police reached the village and got it burnt to ashes. Lakshman Niak with 53 others was tied for the murder of the forest guard. Lakshman Niak was sentenced to death and others were transported for life, excepting 24 who were acquitted.

In Korapur Jail, in no time, 50 politicals died due to inhuman treatment. The jail could accommodate hardly 250 prisoners, but during August movement about 1,000 were thrusted.

During the movement 1,917 persons were arrested, 11 were detained and 560 were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. 324 times lathi-charges took place and 41 rounds were fired in two times resulting in death of 28 persons. Rs. 11,200 were imposed as collective fines. 3 per-

sons were hung up side down on the trees, canned and beaten. 12 cases of rape with women were recorded.

Even in the states in Orrisa the atrocities were not less. In Dhankanal Megini and Talcha firing was resorted. In Nilgu and Talk states even machine-gunning was done from the air. 100 persons were thrust in jail without any reason. Many men were killed and injured. Women were looted even in the day. The property of the people was destroyed recklessly. Women, men and children of 75 villages took shelter in Myorbhanj state. In these villages 25,904 Rupees was imposed as collective fines. In Dhanbal state two men were killed, many others were injured and about 32 persons were sentenced to terms of 20 to 40 years. Property worth thousands of rupees was looted, 43 villages were inflicted with collective fines of 50,000. In Nayagarh state innocent men were made victims on the roads and many persons were inflicted with tortures and sent to jail. The loot and destruction of property was the order of the day. 12 villages were inflicted with collective fines of Rs. 8,000.

In Talchar State 3 men were killed. A college student died in jail due to inhuman treatment. Over 100 persons were injured. Many houses over looted and burnt. 40 men were imprisoned and 95,000 rupees was imposed as fine. Thus Orrisa was not less subjected to the atrocities of 1942 than other provinces of India.

SIND

Sind had been the worst sufferer than all its surrounding provinces. Besides usual arrests and detentions, the innocent people were treated mercilessly. In some respects Sind atrocities stand out as uncomparable : -

Karachi is the capital of Sind. It witnessed, on 19th August, scenes of police excesses which were of gruesome character. The local Industry Merchants' Chamber appointed, on 14th August, a Committee to investigate into the allegations against the police. The following is the full text of the Committee's Report which speaks for itself.

At the first meeting of the Committee held in the Committee Room of the Karachi Indian Merchants' Association on the 14th August 1942, the following gentlemen were co-opted from the business community viz. (1) B.T. Thakur, M.A., F.I.B. (2) Mr. Durgadas B. Advani and (3) Mr. Fida Ali Y.M. Lokmanji.

The Committee heard a number of witnesses and recorded their statements. Some of the persons alleged to have been injured by Police lathi-charges and who were unable to come before the Committee were visited by certain members

of the Committee at their residences and their statements were recorded. The Committee has carefully considered all these reports and statements and has the honour to make the following report :—

"From the depositions made before us by the various witnesses who are alleged to have been belaboured by the Police we have come to the conclusion that the Police, in dealing with the public particularly on Tuesday, the 12th August 1942, has acted in a very high-handed manner and used far more force than was actually necessary in suppressing the alleged agitators and that it also indulged in indiscriminately assaulting innocent persons who were not taking any part in any demonstration. The following is a brief summary of the Committee's findings.

The Police used lathis not only for dispersing crowds, but they have belaboured respectable persons going about on their lawful business either on foot or bicycles. They also entered Reading Rooms, Restaurants and Clubs and indiscriminately assaulted persons sitting therein and also arrested a number of them. They chased young boys and knocked them down with lathis and also trespassed into private residences and other premises. They made indiscriminate arrests of students who were not taking any part in demonstrations or acts of rowdyism. These boys were mercilessly assaulted on the roads and dragged into Police lorries where they were sat upon, trammelled, kicked and foully abused by the Policemen. At the Police Station, these arrested persons were in most cases subjected to very humiliating cruel treatment smacking of the Middle Ages. Some of the youthful victims, mostly students, and sons of respectable citizens have stated before the Committee that at the Police Station after severe beatings by slaps, fisticuffs, kicks etc., they were taken into a room and made to lie down on their backs, with a plain clothesman sitting on their chest, their feet were lifted up by another man and they were beaten on the soles of their bare feet with canes, most of them having received 10 to 20 stripes. They were compelled to touch the boots of the Police Officer with their noses, and shuffle on the ground on their buttocks, or to do, what is known in Sindhi as 'Gisi'.

"One case has been brought to the notice of the Committee in which a Police Officer is alleged to have asked one of the recruits to select any of the arrested boys brought to the Police Station and who had been severely beaten. The Makrani, it has been stated, actually dragged a boy into a room, forcibly removed his pyjama and underwear, but on the latter's raising a hue and cry he was let off. Some of the persons who were arrested at about 12 noon were detained

in the Police Station till 5.0 p.m. and during this period no food or even water was served to them. It was, however, stated that some persons who were detained till 9.0 p.m. were given food.

That the lathi-charges have been indiscriminate and excessively severe has been made evident by the cases brought to our notice. Three of the victims are Government Officials, one being Diwan Mangharan Ailmal, a retired Additional City Magistrate of Karachi. He has received such a severe beating that he is still confined to bed. He was assaulted in the premises of the Amil Institute. He could not possibly have been mistaken for a Congressman or an agitator as he was dressed in English style with a hat and had a newspaper and a tennis bat in his hand.

Another elderly Government servant was also beaten while reading newspaper in the Amil Institute. The case of the third is most pitiable. On the 12th August, 1942, in the morning, he had received a telegram about the death of his brother. He went to the office and obtained leave of absence in order to go to his native place. In the evening, after making a few purchases, he went to the shop of his son near Rambaugh and was standing there when about 8 to 10 Policemen with lathies rushed into the shop. There was no one except himself and his two sons. At the sight of the policemen his sons tried to run away and escaped lightly with one or two blows. The Policemen then started belabouring him. After a few blows on his head blood oozed out of the wound inflicted on him. Several blows were then given on his arms, inspite of his shouting that the shop belonged to his son. Later, a Police Sergeant entered the shop to whom he complained that the shop belonged to his son, and that the Policemen had beaten him for no fault, whereupon the Sergeant promptly ordered him to get out. Accordingly he left the shop but fell down on the road side. There also the Policemen continued beating him. Eventually, he became unconscious and was taken by the neighbours to Rambaugh Hospital where his head-wound was stitched and dressed. Five days after the incident when a few of us saw him he appeared to be in a dazed condition and was lying on a cot at his residence.

Policeman have entered private houses, shops and premises of private clubs in pursuit of individuals. A restaurant on Clayton Road was raided by the Police on the afternoon of the 12th August when there was absolutely no crowd or demonstration and people who were taking tea were severely beaten with lathis, apprehended and taken to the Police

Station, detained for several hours and let off after being subjected to all the cruelties and indignities described above.

There is one more point which we would like to discuss. It is alleged that A. R. P. personnel and Civic Guards were requisitioned into service for Police work during these days and Police recruited undesirable characters and Goondas to help them to deal with the demonstrators. As regards the first allegation, the authorities have already issued a communique denying the employment of A. R. P. personnel and Civic Guards for this purpose. In view of this communique we have not investigated this point.

As regards the other allegation, the authorities have preferred to remain silent. The evidence before us, however, clearly indicates that the authorities have recruited reinforcement for the Police—whether temporarily to combat the present situation or permanently, we are not in a position to say—from a class of people who are generally regarded as a source of danger to society. The following few instances, the general behaviour of these Policemen and the filthy language they have been using, cannot but confirm the public allegation in this respect. Seth Lalji Malhotra, President of the Karachi Indian Merchants' Association and ex-Mayor of Karachi, while he was given lathi blows by one of the new recruits, himself saw some plain clothed men, presumably their Chief insolently butting in while Seth Lalji Malhotra was conveying to the Officer-in-Charge of the Police party, what had happened to him. It is surprising that plain clothed men were employed for lathi-charging. There are allegations of persecution of persons apprehended and taken to the Pclice Station by the Policemen. According to a statement before us, a policeman evidently a new recruit, is said to have cursed the arrested boys in the most filthy language while taking them to the Police Station in a lorry, for being deprived on their account, of his income which he would, otherwise, have made by reselling tickets of 'Basant,' a picture running at the Plaza. Where upon, the Head Constable is stated to have tried to appease him by saying that he (the new recruit) should not worry as he would be given country liquor in the evening. If the statement is true, and there is no reason to doubt its veracity, coming as it does from respectable witnesses. It is likely that the Police have secured the services of some undesirable characters to deal with the present situation. There is an allegation that two of the arrested boys brought to the Police Station were offered to some raw recruits for the purpose of unnatural offence. But we have definite statement from one of the victims about his own case. Such boys have been according to the statements,

taken into the rooms, 'fingered', their cheeks pulled, their pyjamas removed, although no one has come forward to say that the act was actually committed.

After taking statements, oral and written, seeing the victims and their wounds and some of us visiting the scenes of lathi-charges and beatings, we cannot help but arrive at the conclusion that in some cases the use of lathi was not called for at all. In dispersing crowds, the Police as a general rule, has used force much in excess of the actual requirement of the situation and indulged in lathi-charges wantonly, in a brutal manner and behaved towards the students and others most indecently. Ranchhore Police Station has been used as a place of Inquisition, and some of the Officers in charge there have acted illegally and inhumanly. We also feel that the additional Police have been recruited from amongst a class of people who constitute a danger to society. Their employment even for short time cannot but undermine the moral of the Police force, and serve as an encouragement to unruly element which in course of time, it will be difficult to control.

We wonder that such Police excesses can happen in the Capital town of a Province under the very nose of the Governor and a popular Ministry.

The Committee is conscious that they had not the benefit of cross-examination of the witnesses and complaints by those against whom such serious allegations have been made. But the allegations are so widespread, and the complaints appeared to be genuinely serious and true that they cannot be disbelieved. In our opinion, a *prima facie* case about Police excesses, indecencies and maltreatments has been established. It calls for an immediate, impartial and judicial enquiry into the conduct of the Police.

(Signed) Pardaman Singh
do Soonderdas Dharmsey
do Sukhdev Udhavdas
do Jethanand Hiranand, Rao Sahib, (J.P.)
do B. T. Thakur
do A. M. Baakza
do Fida Ali Y. M. Lokmanji
do Durgdas B. Advani
do Manoobhai Doongursee
do Shivji Velji Kothari
do Gobindram Udhavdas, (J. P.)
do Wazirchand Seth.

Karachi 20th August, 1942.

The extracts of this report were quoted by Mr. Lalchand Naval Rai, M. L. A., in his speech in the Central Assembly

on 17th September, 1942, on the motion of consideration of "The situation in India" but no reply to all that was given.

The same member put certain questions regarding flogging punishment for Political offences under Martial Law in Sind in the Central Assembly in its Session of 12th February, 1943. We reproduce below the questions and answers in full:—

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the War Secretary be pleased to state if it is a fact that punishment of flogging with stripes is being awarded to respectable persons and young students of tender age charged with political offences in Sind area where Martial Law is proclaimed?

(b) Is it a fact that Martial Law in Sind was proclaimed avowedly for the suppression of Hur outrages?

(c) Will the Honourable Member be pleased to give the number of students and non-students, separately, who have been awarded this type of punishment since the proclamation of Martial Law, according to each district in Sind?

(d) Is it a fact that many amongst them had fainted during the infliction?

(e) Are Government aware of the enormous discontent and horror that this practice has caused among people of all shades of public opinion?

(f) Do Government propose to stop it?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) The punishment of whipping or canning has been awarded to a number of youths who have created or incited others to create disturbances within the the Martial Law area. Whipping in accordance with Jail Rules has been awarded to a few such youths between the the ages of 18 and 23 for acts of hooliganism. A number of youths between the ages of 12 and 18 have been punished by being lightly canned, as it was not considered desirable to award sentences of imprisonment to them. I may add that all persons were warned by Martial Law Regulation No. 41 that creating any form of disturbance for whatever cause would be considered a Martial Law offence and be punished as such.

(b) The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given by me to part (a) of starred question No. 124 on the 21 September, 1942.

(c) Statistics are not available to show what proportion of the youths whipped or canned were actual students but the majority were of age.

(d) There was no case of fainting during infliction of either whipping or canning.

(e) No.

(f) Whipping is one of the forms of punishment provided

under Martial Law Regulations and Government see no reason to interfere with the discretion of Martial Law Tribunals in this matter.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I ask if the intention was not to apply the Martial Law for civil offences? What was required by the public was the Hur movement should also be met by Martial Law and is it not against that principle that the smaller children should be flogged?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: No Sir, I have already said that Martial Law Regulation No. 41 lays down that creating any form of disturbance for whatever cause would be considered a Martial Law offence and be punished as such.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Was it in connection with Hur movement or not?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: No, Sir, this Regulation was not promulgated in connection with the Hur movement.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I ask whether Honourable Member knows that the public asked and the Martial Law was established only to checkmate the Hur movement?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I know that, but subsequently Regulation No. 41 was made.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: That is exactly what I want to know from the Honourable Member. Was this Regulation made with the intention which was consistent with the original intention or was it made with the further intention to apply it to the civil population as well?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: If there are disturbances in Martial Law area for any reason, that must hamper the military authorities in carrying out the object for which Martial Law was originally established.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Am I to understand from the Honourable Member that the disturbances arose amongst the civil population and because of that it was considered that there should be Martial Law?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: No. What I say is this that Martial Law was originally proclaimed for the suppression of Hur outrages. If any other forms of disturbance occur in the Martial Law area, those disturbances must hamper the Martial Law Administrator in the suppression of the Hur menace for which Martial Law was established. Regulation No. 41 lays down that creating any form of disturbance for whatever cause would be considered a Martial Law offence and be punished as such.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member what were those civil disturbances that necessitated Regulation No. 41? Was it the Congress movement?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Yes, Sir.

Sardar Sant Singh in the Central Assembly on 16th September, 1942, referring to and citing portions of the above quoted report of the Karachi Merchants said :—

"May I ask you whether a series of atrocities that have been mentioned here today can beat this atrocity ? I ask the Honourable Member of the European Group whether they will quietly condone it in the name of law and order. This is one Committee of independent men who have gone into the matter and they have published this report. Well, Sir, if these things have happened at one place in the country, do you think they will leave soft feeling for the Britishers or the Police in the bosoms of the people ? Reflect, consider and judge coolly. The time is not when we in our desire to condemn each other forget the real psychology of the people, forget the real facts and say that we will fight both the internal as well as the external enemy. Through you, Sir, I want to appeal to the Government ; pause and think over before it is too late. That is why I placed a constructive proposal in my amendment before the House. I am afraid my friends are correct when they say that my amendment has no chance of being passed in this House. I know that is the case. If I were to be guided by the verdict of this House, I would sooner be in a mad house than in this place because here reason does not reign and the verdict is not given on the merits of the proposition. It is all for propaganda. But the Government forget at this stage that war is not won by propaganda alone. In making that supreme efforts to win the war, they will have to win the supreme co-operation, unstinted co-operation of the people of this country. So long as the morale of the country is down or is converted into active hostility, they cannot win this war. They will not only ruin themselves but they will ruin the Americans and the Chinese who are here. They will ruin the Allied Nations whose number is 56 or 57.

"I will only say that even if we look at the brightest side of the picture that they have succeeded in suppressing this movement, they would certainly leave a trail of bitterness behind with no love for the Britishers in this country. Do they want that state now ?

"I will only say this in the end that before it is too late, let saner counsels prevail and that Government would take stock of the situation. I have yet lot to say which I am leaving unsaid, but let it not be said of the present Government Members that they were the coffin bearers of the British Imperialism in the country".

DELHI

The capital of India, the old Imperial city of Delhi, was

no less victim of the British Savagery during the period under treatment. The following are the Press-Notes issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Delhi:—

"NEW DELHI, Tuesday, August 10, 1942 : A Press Note issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Delhi, says that after a meeting early on Monday morning, demonstrators paraded about the city endeavouring without success to enforce a complete "hartal". Muslim shops and a few Hindu shops remained open. When the crowd reached Ajmeri Gate they were held up by the police, but a number of them, largely students, infiltrated into Connaught Circus, where a certain amount of hooliganism took place. Some windows were broken and some Europeans were obstructed. But no one was injured. Connaught Circus was cleared, and the hooligans returned to the city. Some damage was done there to trams and buses and occasional stones were thrown at passing cars. Among these was the bus of the Convent of Jesus and Mary. The driver was injured. Other cases of molestation of Europeans in the city occurred earlier in the morning.

"The workers of the Birla and Delhi Cloth Mills went on strike without notice.

"British troops were called out in the afternoon to stand by".

"NEW DELHI, August 12, 1942 : The police opened fire thrice in Delhi, on Wednesday, 11th August, 1942. A crowd broke into a post office in Pharganj in the afternoon and after throwing out stamps and post cards was about to set fire to them when the police intervened and dispersed it with a volley. One man was kilied and one injured.

"Firing was again opened by the police in Chauri Bazar, when bricks were thrown at them from roof-tops. No one is reported injured as a result of this firing.

"For the third time, the police opened fire on a Congress proceession in Naya Sarak. It is stated that a police lorry patrolling the area was stoned by some of the processionists and the police fired in self-defence. One man was seriously injured and admitted into tho hospital.

"Five municipal terminal tax outposts in Old Delhi are reported to have been looted or burnt. A wheat flour mill in Sabzi Mandi was broken into and large quantities of flour taken away by a crowd.

"The income-tax office at Tees Hazari, a post office and A.R.P. post near Sabzi Mandi were also burnt.

"In Karol Bagh, the house of a Chinaman was forced open and furniture thrown out. The crowd was trying to set fire to it when police appeared and dispersed them.

"Chandni Chowk, the old city's business quarter and the

main centre of yesterday's disturbance was today deserted except for armed police and British troops, including parachute men, placed at points where narrow twisting by-lanes branch off from the main bazar. The charred remains of a motor bicycle, an R.A.F. lorry and two fire engines lay at some distance from the municipal office which was itself on fire, with firemen rushing about trying to take water hoses into the smoke-begrimed building.

"The fire-brigade were handicapped by the loss of two engines. The police and the troops were the object of attention, sometimes hostile and sometimes curious and good-humoured, from crowds or groups gathered in the by-lanes or looking on from balconies of the buildings on both sides of the half-mile long bazar. All the shops on the ground-floor along the whole length of the bazar were shuttered up and barred.

"The smell of burning rubber tyres and paper filled the air. The electric clock on the hundred-foot tower in front of the municipal building had stopped at 12 noon and the siren timed to go off at tea hour was continuing to wail for hours afterwards. The ladder leading up to the clock having been burnt, there was no means of reaching the clock and stopping the siren.

"The municipal office building is reported to have suffered extensive internal damage. The municipal meeting hall, furniture and fittings being destroyed and a number of rare old irreplaceable paintings burnt out. Many of the records and the whole of cash have been saved.

"The godown of the railway office in Naya Bazar was set on fire. Wire obstruction has been placed near the Kotwali.

"All approaches to New Delhi are guarded by armed police and troops and other steps have been taken to prevent the disturbances spreading up this area.

"Most shops and schools in Old and New Delhi were closed again today.

"Banks agents in Delhi and New Delhi, who held a meeting on Wednesday morning at the Reserve Bank office, decided that banks which were closed should resume business from Thursday morning.

"The police also opened fire on a crowd near the Kishenganj railway station, resulting in injuries to six persons.

"It is now learnt that 13 persons were killed as a result of police firing in Delhi till Wednesday".

"The following press communique was issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Delhi, at 8 p. m. to day: –

"Conditions in Delhi after the disturbances of August 11

improved but some serious damage to property was done in Karol Bagh and Paharganj areas. Among the properties damaged were those of refugees from Burma and Chinese, which is so symbolic of the oft-expressed friendship of Congress with China. In Old Delhi, peaceful conditions are rapidly returning under the strong police and military forces now stationed there. A few shops are reopening. In new Delhi all is quiet".

After such incidents for sometime, the usual lathi-charge and firing were continued besides indiscriminate prosecutions were launched. Thus the people were persecuted even in the capital of India.

ASSAM

About the Government action in Assam we quote below what was said by the Premier, Sir M. Saadullah in the Assam Assembly replying to some questions:

SHILLONG, Dec. 13, 1942: Three thousand one hundred and forty-five persons were arrested during the past year since August 1942, in connection with political activities. Of these 1,619 were convicted. Altogether 405 were detained under the D. I. R. during the same period. Collective fines amounting to Rs. 4, 40,487 were imposed, out of which about Rs. 2,49,578 had been realized.

The Premier also said that on six occasions during the same period police were compelled to open fire, twice in Darrang district, and twice in Kamrup district, once in Nowgong district and once in Goalpara district, when 14 persons were killed and 33 injured.

Referring to the case of His Holiness the Adhikari Goswami of Garamur, the Premier said that Government issued instructions that if the Goswami furnished an undertaking to avoid any political propaganda activity the suspension of his sentence might be considered. Due to reports received of his propaganda activity in the jail in which he was originally lodged, Mr. Deveswar Sarma, Chief Whip of the Congress Coalition Party in the Assam Assembly, had been transferred from Jorhat Jail, the premier informed.

The Judicial Minister informed that Government were employing all feasible methods of improvement as regards treatment of political prisoners in jails, particulary of diet.

Besides legal and ordinary atrocities indiscriminate firing and beating was done in a most inhuman manner.

A Press Message supporting the above fact is given below :—

"On 20t September, 1942, in Dhakia Juli (Assam), Police

fired and continued firing indiscriminately on a running crowd. One constable even chased the running persons. In the building of the police station in the South of Hath Khola, a dead body was found. Another dead-body was found in the drain in the south of police station. A dead-body of a young girl was found near the P.W.D. drain and the shop of Satish Viswas. Afterwards one more dead-body was found near the Godhajali river about a mile far from the Police Station. The dead-body at Hath Khola was of a beggar. From all these it clearly appears that the police firing was done indiscriminately and wantonly and hence was cowardly."

These remarks are taken from the court judgement of Mr. S.K. Das, Special Magistrate. But the Assam Premier, in the Assembly, refused to inquire into this incident saying that firing was done in self-defence by the police.

In Assam, an attempt was done to establish parallel Government. The people succeeded to a great extent in paralysing the British Government in their province. The Government ran mad and took to indiscriminate firing and bayoneting of the people who gathered in peaceful meetings. Assam Police got free hand to do its worst. On the establishment of Saadullah Ministry, on August 1942, the police was licenced to carry on inhuman repression in their own way.

The two brave ladies Kanak Lata and Tuleshwari will go immortal in the history of Assam who faced death as bravely as any human being inspired with the spirit of patriotism could do. Kanak Lata a soft hearted girl of 13 years who led a procession on 20 September, in district Darang, to hoist National Flag on Golapur police station. She was stopped by the police officer, but she refused to obey the order and proceeded with her procession. The police started firing. A bullet pierced her chest and she fell down on the ground, bled and died. The second was a youngman Mukund Kaoti. In this all massacaring of people, white planters also participated. These European planters were armed with guns and pistols and were accompanied by their field guards, who were armed with lathis and sticks. While the processionists were dispersed by the police firing, these European planters with their servants fell upon them and killed most of them.

The above narrated incident of Dhakia Juli in which the death of a girl is mentioned, we may here point out that the girl was none else but brave Tuleshwari. These atrocities were perpetrated not only by the police and the military but the Moslem goondas were also summoned to commit the brutalities on unarmed people beside molesting the women.

A week after the firing incident mentioned above the market was held in the city. The crowds which gathered for marketing were treated as Congress crowds and wantonly fired at. The men were mercilessly beaten and women were molested. In this incident 16 men were killed, among them were 3 women and one was pregnant, besides 100 others were wounded. To express protest against this massacre a meeting was held in Tejpur on 21st September, 1942, where the gathering was belaboured and subjected to firing and bayoneting as a result of which 100 of them were wounded.

In the same manner in village Gola under Patacharkuch Police Station, on 25 Sept. firing was resorted on a dispersing crowd, after the meeting. Two men Madan Chand Banmant and Rawat Ram died on the spot. The same sort of bloodshed was done in Nagawa, Dang and Kamrup by the Police. In Nagawa the people were organised to some extent. In the nearing village the revolutionary spirit was rampant. Their organization became a terror to the police. Hence to supress the district the Government resorted to inhuman cruelties on the people of the district. The military was posted on the village and rail roads who took to indiscriminate firing on the passers-by which caused death of many innocent persons. On 20th August, '42, one military party which was hiding near the bridge of Bavejia fired on two youngmen. The second day, military police party shot dead a youngman near Rohapal, six miles far from Gohati. In village Bavejia, helpless women, men and children were subjected to severe brutalities in the mid-night. In the hot mid-day 400 men, women and children under armed police guard were forced to march 12 miles to the police station. One woman had in her lap a child of 3 days, who died in the way, and her mother followed her after some days.

Tilak Dheka, the leader of this Shanti Saina, who was the resident of Borapujia village in district Nawgaon was put to death by the military. Shanti Saina was established by the villagers for their protection. Tilak Dheka, seeing the march of the military towards the village, warned the people by sounding Turahi, but he could sound it only once that he was hit by the bullet shot and died at the sopt. The village people gathered and surrounded the military and at the cost of 5 or 6 lives snatched the dead body of Tilak Dheka. As a result of this incident 300 persons were arrested and many others were tortured, houses were burnt, teachers were beaten and students were subjected to unheard of atrocities.

On the 16th of September, in Barahmpur 3 men were killed who gathered in front of the Congress house in connection with a feast. On this gathering military police

fired which caused many casualties of youngmen and ladies even.

In Upper Assam, in Shiv Sagar and Jorahat Sub-Divisions, construction work was done on a wide scale and village Panchayats were established. In Charigaon, Hatigarh and Teauk and some other places parallel Governments were formed. They were established according to the civilised governments of the present times. All this could not be tolerated by the administration. Many workers of Jorahat were brutally beaten. A crowd collected near Teauk Police Station. Police and military constantly attacked them. Not only men, but also women and children were severely hit by the lathis and bayonets. Two persons died and 20 others were injured. In the same manner Police and military attacked a crowd of 50,000 persons near Police Technical School, Jaisagar, resulting into severe injuries to many persons.

Kaushal Kunwar who was fired with the zeal of patriotism and was a staunch follower of the Congress was implicated in Sanypar Train tragedy case and sentenced to death. The young patriot was hanged on 15th. June, 1943. He kept up cheerful countenance and brave spirit till the last moment. In the same manner Kamla Meri suffered severe inhuman treatment in the jail and died suffering the tortures of jail life patiently. The collective fines in Assam were said to be 1,25,000 but they were realised in a very cruel manner. Military and Police entered the houses of the poor villagers forcibly and insulted the women. Whenever the p lice could not find any other article they even snatched away the cooking utensils of the family. These sufferings of Assam were very great and particularly Assam was subjected to severe brutalities because it was on a boarder of India and nothing was known about the happenings in the other parts of the country.

SATARA: The city of Peshwas, the founders of the Hindu Empire in India who fought bravely the foreigners and maintained the honour of their country even after the slavery of the Moghul rule in India for centuries, could not remain without making a mark in the grand attempt at revolution in 1942. Nana Patil, an innocent and simple looking man, became the organiser of free parallel government in Satara during 1942 and after. The Government was known as "Patri Sarkar" which successfully ran its course for months together. But here we are primarily concerned with the black deeds of the British rule on the occasion of the public demonstration. A police officer arrested a Congress leader and the armed police belaboured the crowd. A Congress worker named Shri Pandurang was injured. On

15th. Sept., while Shri Parsu Ram Dharge was leading a procession in Baruj the police resorted to firing and Shri Dharge was hit by 3 bullets and died at the spot. Another day Shri Pandu Master was canned in the presence of a responsible police officer at Islampur. Half an hour after the dispersal of the crowd, the persons who were standing near the court, were fired at. One peasant named Kanduwara Pate died with bullet shot. Shri Pandya, engineer of Kriloshar factory, died of his wounds while he was being removed to the hospital. Other three persons also got serious injuries. Such incidents in Satara were innumerable which can not be recounted here for want of space.

Collective fines were heavily imposed in Satara which went up to Rs. 2,000 each village. The realization of the fines was very atrocious. Villages were being surrounded, people were not allowed to get out of the village, nor even the cows and buffaloes could go out for drinking water. The ornaments of ladies were forcibly snatched and sold in the Bazar. Beside, other tortures to the people were much rampant in the district.

The atrocities in the jail were perhaps of the worst sort ever heard by the human ears. In Karad and Bahadar Talukas, prisoners were subjected to such tortures as ordinary human mind can not even think of. A new method known as "Sundri" for torturing was invented. Leather straps were soaked in salt water and prisoners were beaten with them. Smoke and hot water was also used to torture the prisoners. Four old men of village Katewadi were seated in a line and stone slabs were put over their heads and 4 boys mounted on them. From the Children of 8 years to the old men of 80 were subjected to the torture of being drawn off their skins.

The worst of the atrocities were perpetrated when the police surrounded the village in the nights and took away the ladies of the absconders out of the villages in some solitary places and subjected them to torture and molestation. The women were brutally raped. The modest women drowned in shame and bent heads, weeping and sobbing, returned to their villages. In the history of repression of political uprisings perhaps nowhere in the world, modesty of women was ever violated so very recklessly and persistently as it was done during 1942 and after throughout India under the aegis of the British Rule.

A group of independent journalists who visited Satara in April, '45, reported widespread terroristic activities by the police, who in some instances had obtained the services of criminals to aid them. Further they cited number of cases of

police brutality, confiscation of villagers' property, more than 2,000 arrests since 1942, six deaths in jail, 13 killed by police guns in 1942 and collective fines imposed on 34 villages since August, 1942.

Muslims, Government servants and depressed classes, who got most of the Government jobs in villages were excluded from the collective fines. Karve, a village of 3,500 inhabitants, received a collective fine of Rs. 30,000.

Satara, suffered British atrocities in keeping with its past sacrifices and history.

KARNATAK: In Huble one boy died by the police bullet and 7 were injured in village Bilham and many such incidents were repeated in many other parts of Karnatak. The result of these brutalities was that people in general rose in revolt. A short of organised revolution prevailed in provinces, once the government was completely paralysed. The government thereafter lost its head and behaved in a most brutal manner. For about 6 months 5,000 police force with 300 officers hunted the leaders of the revolution and succeeded in shutting them behind the prison bars. In the prison patriots were severely persecuted to give out the address of their companions. Villagers were so much persecuted that their life was made hell. In the night people were not allowed to sleep, and they were made to awake from their sleep. If any body tried to avoid the police vigilance he was mercilessly beaten. At the time of the police investigation the people were canned on their naked buttocks, till they disclosed the secrets or became unconscious. The worst of the doings of the police was the outraging of the modesty of the women. On the pretext of searching for the absconder the police could enter into any house and carry on the campaign of their misdeeds. In this rule of the police no citizen could live with honour and maintain self-respect. Karnatak in common with other provinces of India perhaps more than any other suffered a severe stroke of British Savagery during 1942 and after.

VIDARBHA

In Vidarbha Province of the Congress, which is a part of C. P. with its headquarters at Akola, according to the report of the Provincial Congress Committee the following deeds were committed by the government.

In rural parts the police authorities used third degree methods, uncivilized and inhuman. They included stranding of men or boys in hilly tracts, at the mid-nights, till the suspected became unconscious or sustained fractures of limbs, putting chilly powder into the eyes and anus. Light lathi-

charges were resorted at Akola and in Amraoti District to disperse meetings. Shootings were resorted to in the Amraoti district at Yawali, Banoda, Khanpur and about 30 persons sustained injuries and more than 15 died. In the Amraoti District (at Yawali and similar places where shooting took place) looting and destruction of shops by police occurred. In jails Second class prisoners were getting very bad treatment. Beating, lathi-charge, neglect of medical help etc., were not uncommon there.

BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS SPEAKS

How the reign of terror in its worst, most inhuman and brutal form was kept in force in India during the August 1942 and after is narrated in the preceding pages of this chapter. The facts mentioned are as exact and accurate as possible. They are derived from authentic and reliable sources. How horrible and heart-rending they are is beyond the pale of the human pen to write.

The political situation in India after 9th August, 1942, was a subject of discussion in the Central Assembly and the Council of State as well. The members of the Council of State (Upper House) generally come from the upper strata of the society and most of them have a very soft corner in their heart for the British Government in India. Most of them also do not desire any drastic and sudden change in the form of the administration of the country. Still they were also moved by the horrible atrocities perpetrated in India in the name of suppressing the uprising after the arrest of the Congress Leaders. This whole period of the Government atrocities is termed here as "The Reign of terror".

We would conclude this chapter with the following relevant extracts from the speeches of the members of the Council of State in its sittings on 22nd, 23rd and 24th September 1942, on the motion regarding Political Situation in India :—

Hon'ble Sir Mahomed Usman (leader of the house) said :—

"To control and suppress these disturbances, and to maintain law and order in the country, the following measures were taken :—

"1. The Congress Committees were declared to be unlawful associations and important individuals who were likely to organize and lead mass movement and create disturbances with the object of paralyzing the administration were detained.

"2. As this movement was intended to interfere in the prosecution of the war and to paralyze the war efforts, action was taken under the Defence of India Rules.

"3. The Penalties Enhancement Ordinance, the Special

Criminal Courts Ordinance and Colletive Fines Ordinance were put into operation.

"4. Certain restrictions on the publication of news were imposed in the best interests of the country.

"5. In the disturbed areas fullest use was made of the police who had on several occasions had to face very difficult situations and were forced to open fire on riotous mobs. As a result of this 390 people were killed and about 1,060 wounded. A large number of policemen were injured and 32 were killed.

"6. British and Indian troops were used in aid of civil power in about 60 places. They were forced on many occasions to open fire, the casualties being 331 killed and 159 wounded, and the military casualties being 11 killed and 7 wounded.

"7. The Air Force was employed for reconnaissance and patrol".

The Honourable Sir A. P. Patro (Nominated Non-Official): "Sir, after the graphic description of the tragic results that we see around is today, and that we saw lately, the Government ought in justice to the people to have stated or indicated also what has brought about the present state of things, what are the causes that have led to this disruption and disorder and destruction of property. It would have been very enlightening at this stage if we had indications of that from the Government. The absence of any allusion to that is indeed to be deplored."

The Honourable Mr. P. N. Sapru (United Provinces Southern : Non-Mohammadan) : "No one conversant with the situation in the provinces and districts can deny that in maintaining order not all officials high and low, have adhered to the maxim that the force used must not exceed the necessities of the situation, that in restoring public peace care must be taken to see that the innocent do not suffer along with the guilty, that things are not done which are likely to excite racial passions, that people are made to feel that the object is not to humiliate them or any particular section of them but merely to assert the majesty of the law. We live, Sir, in a period of firing, lathi-charges, collective fines and whipping.

"The real problem before statesmanship today is that people feel alienated from the law and they so feel alienated as they find that Government has been preparing them not for the freedom that they desire but for perpetuating a status quo which they intensely hate, which they intensely dislike.

"The attitude of Government had been extremely, extraordinarily provocative.

"An objective study of the situation has convinced me that the main responsiblity for the present unrest in the country rests mainly, if not entirely, upon the Government of this country.

" It is therefore, a tragedy that you have interned Indian leaders who are definitely and wholeheartedly opposed to Axis aggression. You rely on Rai Bahadurs and people of that type. I think it is easier for them to transfer their loyalty, than for people who have an anti-imperialist ideology. It is a tragedy that a large number of people who were willing and eager to help you in putting up a very strong resistance, have had to keep aloof from the war effort on account of the Government attitude. It is nonsense to say that the Congress is fifth columnist or is pro-Axis. A free India would have been able to render the maximum help she was capable of to China, the Soviet Union and other countries. *What you have done is to deprive these countries, by your policy, of the maximum help that they could have obtained if you had settled with the Congress.*

"It is India's misfortune, it is Britain's misfortune, that Britain has as her Prime Minister one who is so entirely devoid of imagination, who is so absolutely racial in his outlook as Mr. Churchill. He has made a speech full of venom against the people of this country. Even the "Times" had to remind him that the Congress was not a negligible factor in Indian politics and such is the arrogance of this statesman that he actually boasts, while fighting a war for freedom, that there are more white troops in this country at this time than at any period in Indian history. *It is, therefore, impossible, having regard to this background for any thinking Indian to support the policy culminating in the arrests of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress leaders.*

"Government has fired the first shot, that they have taken the initiative and opened the long looked for second front in India".

Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Sri Narain Mehta (Bihar) :—

"The extent, depth and import of this movement has not been properly understood or realised. It is neither a students' movement nor a Congress movement nor even a Fifth Column attempt to sabotage India's war effort. It is the desperate gesture of a nation before whom you have dangled the offer of political freedom, a nation exasperated beyond the limits of human patience, a nation that has seen the anomaly of having to protect a freedom that it does not enjoy.

"It is not my purpose to extenuate the excesses of the mob nor to exaggerate the repressive measures of the

Government, I must say that while mob violence had a clear line of action, Government measures seem to have proceeded on no plan or method, except that of striking terror throughout the entire countryside. The net result of this has been an impression that the Government has become panic-stricken and has consequently aroused in the minds of the people a feeling that if this is to be the Indians' lot under British rule, to be shot on suspicion, to be hanged on evidence inadequate in law, to be arrested on the whim of a policeman, the average Indian may well be pardoned if he thinks of the Axis occupation of the conquered country as different only in degree."

The Honourable Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das (Punjab):—

"The Government is to my mind suffering from propaganda complex. Having made up its mind not to part with power, it realised that it must one day come into clash with the Congress. It prepared itself for that clash in the convenient belief that the Congress could be crushed at a stroke. There is no doubt that it was in this belief that the Government acted on 9th August. Having assumed that the Congress movement would have no backing, it gave to the world a daily picture of "All quiet on all fronts". For some weeks we were told that there were hardly any disturbances worth mentioning and the All-India Radio even ceased mentioning the matter after the first few days following the arrests of Congressmen. Suddenly the Government appears to have changed its propaganda angle. It has now let loose an account of arson, loot, murder and sabotage to show that it had been faced with "an open rebellion" and that but for the loyalty of the military, the police and the Government servants, the rebellion might have paralysed the machinery of Government. At the same time we are given the assurance that the general public has remained steady and has not supported the rebels.

"What can be the motive of publishing now these blood-curdling accounts of hooliganism ? I suspect that the motive is to keep the Congress leaders locked up in jail for the period of the war and to carry on the administration on the existing pattern.

"I wish to know whether the Government feels satisfied that after imprisoning the Congress leaders it has done its job and that it can take a complacent view of the situation in the country.

"I have a stake in the country and during my long public life I have been a supporter of ordered progress. I am pained to find today that the Government stands friendless. Even those classes such as the Taluqdars of Oudh, who were

Government's most loyal supporters, are not without misgivings as to the policy Government is pursuing".

The Honourable Haji Syed Muhammad Husain (United Provinces):—

"The Indian Members of the Viceroy's Council are the gentlemen who are being proclaimed from the house tops by the British Government in every corner of the world as members of a Government which is Indian. Have they discharged their duty to India in this debate ? Is it sufficient for them to support the measures of repression for counteracting the present subversive movement ? If they did that, I think they certainly discharged only one of their duties, but that duty was only to the Government. Have they come out with any constructive proposal ? Have they done anything to remove the present deadlock, and to ease the Indian situation, or have they merely joined hands with the Government in repression ? I should have expected something better from the Indian Members at least. They are man of integrity and experience. They are of all types—feather-weight, light-weight, middle-weight and heavy-weight. They have had experience in their life. But they have utilized their intellect and experience in favour of the Government and nothing in favour of the Indians.

"In this country, since the last 30 years there have been public and popular movements against the British Government. The fight for freedom which was confined some time ago to within the four walls of a certain room or to drawing-room politicians came into public and popular-movements started a few years ago. This movement openly created an atmosphere in the country which was wholly anti-Government or anti-British agitations and establish goodwill among the people of India by the British. Why ? Because they did not bother their head to create good-will among the Indian people and wanted to rule so long as they could. The result is that in India today—I hope I am not very wrong—there is not one single Indian, whether he is a Government servant, a man in the street or whether he is a member of any institution of the Government, even of the Executive Council, who is enamoured of the present administration. It is only natural. No Indian today having realized what slavery has been and what freedom means, can possibly be a supporter of the system of Government which exists today. Among the masses there is very great anti-British feeling. If officials want to know the mass mentlity—which they never care to know and I am quite certain that they do not know correctly—let me tell them. Now I am going to tell them how best to act in a manner which would be beneficial—to everybody.

The mass mentality is anything but pro-British—not because of the present movement which is only accelerating and accentuating the thing which already existed. *The methods which are employed in suppressing the movement* are helping a good deal in that direction.

"Now in the country, whether your repressive measures are justified or not, they are creating an atmosphere which would be exceedingly dangerous at the hour of test, namely, when an attack is launched on India. We have had experience of Malaya and Burma. There is a shout that in India forces of Fifth Columnists are working. I do not believe it. If you merely extend and elaborate the definition of a Fifth Columnist a little more the mentality of an Indian today is such that every one can be called a Fifth Columnist. The action of the Government, even if justified, is making even their friends enemies. Now what would be the result of that? You may be able to stop mob violence, demonstrations, you may be able to shoot down people like dogs who bark at you, but what is the ultimate result? You are creating a deep-rooted spite and anger in the minds of those people whose association and co-operation you would require in the nearest possible future.

"My idea had always been and is that the methods that the Government is employing, namely, the brutal force, might ultimately prove to be very dangerous.

"India is a sub-continent. The people of India when they will be ready to work shoulder to shoulder with the British people I am quite certain could provide an Army which will absolutely wipe off continents. India is a huge thing. It has enormous martial races who have proved their merits on not one but many battle fields. Secure it, try and get the co-operation and good-will of those people and then the winning of the war is certain, and without this, if the Government wants to win the war *by terrorising people, by threatening people, by bluffing people, I am afraid that will not do*".

The Honourable Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzuru:—

"Sir, Government ought seriously to think of the measures by which reconciliation can be brought about between them and the people. It is futile for them to think that the dissatisfaction which has manifested itself in the country has been engineered by the Congress. Considering the fact that the adherents of the Congress got no time to prepare the people for carrying out their programme, did not get time even to inform the people fully of their programme, it is absurd to say that the movement is wholly engineered. I think, Sir, considering the situation impartially

one cannot doubt that the upheaval that has taken place reflects the feelings of the people towards the British Government. The despair and exasperation to which the policy of the British Government have driven all people, whether Hindus or Muslims, have unfortunately resulted in acts of lawlessness on the part of the people, but my Honourable friends opposite should on an occasion like this bear in mind Lord Morley's words that when people rebel it is not their fault but their misfortune. A friend of mine, Sir, convened a meeting at Allahabad to ask the people to co-operate with the Government in their war effort. This meeting was conveyed under the auspices of the Communist Party. My friend in the course of his speech attacked the Japanese for the atrocities of which they have been guilty in China. A man in the audience excitedly got up and said, "You might have said that some time ago but please do not say that now". A day earlier, or the same day, a procession of students had been fired on by the police and one of them had died. The students I understand had not been guilty of any violence and when the news of the firing on the students spread through the city it touched the hearts even of those who deplored the present movement. This little incident should suffice to show to Government which way the wind is blowing and instead of burying their heads like ostriches in the sand they ought to look facts in the face, realize their responsibilities and think of their duty towards the people whose trustees they profess to be instead of always thinking of their prestige and power."

CHAPTER III

THE INDIVIDUAL OFFICERS BEHAVED AS "BLOOD-THIRSTY TIGERS"

In the preceding chapter an account is given of the British atrocities in India after the arrest of the Congress-leaders on the 9th August, 1942. The period which covered the brutal and inhuman British Savagery is aptly named as "THE REIGN OF TERROR". The general and broad policy of the Government of "repression" and "suppression" of the people, no doubt was primarily repsponsible for the savagery and atrocities committed on the Indian people but the responsibility for their actual execution rested on the individual officers who were directly deputed to perpetrate them.

The individual officers and specially "British Officers" actually behaved like "Blood-thirsty tigers". Their spirit was of revenge and of extreme revenge with rage and fury. They

moved from place to place hunting the Indian people indiscriminately and most inhumanly.

Numerous such incidents have been quoted in the previous chapter. Here their mere reference will suffice to prove that the individual official of the Government, specially the British, vied with their predecessors like General Neil and others of the year 1857 and General Dyer and others of 1919. Indiscriminate beating, flogging and shooting were the usual practice besides torturing, humiliating and even violating the modesty of women were acts which were done without any hitch and hesitation. The *man* in the Government officials was reduced to *a brute* and with their acts they put the humanity as a whole to shame and defame.

The British rule in India will end sooner or later. The history of the period will have its own record but the worst and blackest will be the deeds of the British Officials which they performed on innocent and unarmed people of India.

"Midnapore", "Chimur", "Nandurbar" and numerous other places in Bihar, United Provinces and other parts of the country go far ahead of the massacre of Jalianwala Bagh in 1919. To enumerate the black deeds of the Officers who degraded and degenerated the element of humanity in man to that of a brute and behaved like "blood-thirsty beast" is beyond the very sense of humanity which inspires and the very blood which runs into the veins of every Indian. As an ordinary man of present century and civilisation and Indian too can ill-afford to forgive and forget all that has been done by the individual British Officers. Their acts breed contempt, disgust and spirit of unending revenge. But we, Indians, have been bred and brought up in a different civilisation and culture and our creed is one of "Non-violence", "forbearance" and "forgiveness". We actually hold and shall ever hold as an article of faith the following :—

"They know not what they do, they deserve mercy and not anger and revenge".

This is our assertion not under the cover of cowardice and helplessness but under the spirit of "True bravery and strength" which conquers and attains lasting victory over human heart and does not know defeat in any form.

CHAPTER IV

BRUTAL TREATMENT TOWARDS WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

The atrocities were perpetrated indiscriminately and brutally. The terrible tale of all this heart-rending account is already narrated in a previous chapter. Here there repe-

tition is not desired. But what actually is aimed at is to show that not only women and children were not spared but that they were also deliberately and pointedly offered brutal treatment. On all such previous occasions either in 1857 or in 1919 or in 1930–32, such things were not done so very deliberately and intentionally. The honour of women was maintained and they were never so shamefully molested as on this occasion. No case of rape was reported which was done by the British Officials as a matter of their policy and pride. But this time, it appears, it was as a matter of their policy and pride. The cases of humiliation, molestation and rape have been specifically given in the chapter of "Reign of terror". They are also mere instances and not exhaustively detailed. Still they are enough to show as to what depth of degradation, the character of the British administration in India and its officers is reduced to. This is extremely shocking and forces humanity to bend its head in shame and disgrace.

Further the actual hunting, shooting and barbarously beating of the school children, boys and youngmen are things which were incidental on all such previous occasions and never went to this extent as during the fateful August, 1942 and after.

Feelings of tenderness, and mercy are said to be inherent in man. There is also limit to cruelty and hard-heartedness. There is a point at which man is forced to shudder and stop his brutality. Such a point is a cry of an innocent child, life of a playful ignorant boy or of a youth in sublime excitement. But alas! there is no "point" at which any sense of mercy or feeling could arise in the steel-framed British administration in India or its officers. Their thirst of avenging and perpetrating inhuman and brutal atrocities could not be quenched till it reached to the extremest limit of shedding blood of innocent children, boys and youngmen and ravishing the womenhood of India. Can there be anything more brutal, inhuman and shameful? What is now left which could be conceived of as worse than this?

The most terrible tales of tyranny have been heard and even seen. The people actually shivered, shuddered and swooned at their sight or hearing. But even they could not go to such an extent. The worst-painted and propagated atrocities of Nazi-Germany and Fascist-Japan did not even touch the fringe of these inhuman and brutal deeds. Nowhere such innocent and unarmed people as Indians, were ever offered such treatment. Children and women of even violent and warring people—what of innocent and unarmed people—were never so treated. But the British, the proud

custodians of civilisation and culture, in the garb of defence of India and quelling of the internal disturbances, could do all this.

CHAPTER V

HOW INDIAN PEOPLE REDUCED TO MERE CHATTELS

August, 1942, did not bring in its train only "The Reign of Terror" with its extreme severities and brutalities but also marked a special trend of the British policy in India. It was the policy of suppression of all civil liberties in India reducing Indians to a status of a "Chattel." All the active political institutions and associations even remotely connected with the Indian National Congress were declared unlawful and suppressed. The right of people to freedom of association and freedom of speech were completely snatched away and crushed. The people were prohibited from holding any public meeting or taking out any public procession. Even the funeral and Marriage processions were not only not allowed to be taken out freely without any restrictions but were actually prohibited. The press was muzzled and almost all the nationalist papers were forced to stop their publication in August, 1942. After suspension of their publication for months together some resumed publishing again under new and strict restrictions. Besides all these suffocating restrictions police was specially empowered under D. I. R. to arrest indiscriminately. So the arrests and detentions were made a regular routine since August, 1942. Nobody could feel safe and secure. Even the extreme loyalists, toadies and setellites of the Government could not escape from the all-catching clutches of the police. The Police-Raj was started from August, 1942, and it continued to last without any check or control. Besides all this, the extreme type of atrocities have been cited to some extent in the previous chapters. The people were subjected to collective fines and their cruel and indiscriminate realisation by the Police-methods. The people were again forced to keep watch on public roads, buildings, ways and Railways etc. "Congressman" was declared an outlaw. The white-Khadi-Cap (Gandhi-Cap) was made a virtual offence. Thus the Indians were actually reduced to a status of a chattel. They could not move and act freely. They could not speak and write freely. They could not associate and meet freely. Their life, property and movements were subjected to such restrictions that it became really hard to breathe even. Thus an Indian was deprived of all ordinary and essential civil liberties and was treated like a dumb-driven cattle or a chattel without

any option or freedom. This sort of life of an Indian lasted not only for a day or a month or even a year but right upto the release of Gandhiji and other Congress-leaders in 1945.

The Congressmen were treated as out-law from the very morning of 9th August, 1942, and behaved in no better way, whether in jail or outside. Those who were imprisoned were prisoners all-right with the jail restrictions and severities but those who were allowed to stay outside were also practically kept in the same sort of suffocating restrictions. Their movements were watched and their places of living and visiting were guarded and they themselves were virtually dogged. Their visitors and their post were also not left unchecked. Thus a Congressman was being treated worse than the most dangerous type of beast. And who is not a Congressman in India! Every Indian is a Congressman but the one who is hired by the Government to work as their tool to do all this dirty job of suppressing and perpetrating atrocities on their fellow-countrymen. Still the Indian personnel of the Government even, as a whole has been definitely lukewarm and unwilling, and in almost all cases the brutalities were carried out under European-management, whether managing personality was a self-satisfied and callous Viceroy, blood-thirsty Governor, a ferocious District Magistrate or a cruel and barbarous Superintendent of Police.

In the world history a vast number of people, so huge and illustrious as the huge population of India is, has never been so ill-treated and reduced to such a status as the Indian people have been done during the British regime and particularly during the period from 9th August, 1942 and after. It is a matter of shame and disgrace for the humanity as a whole. It really shudders one and gives one the most shocking thrill in which naturally comes the following words in awe and wonder:

"WHAT MAN HAS MADE OF MAN."

PART VI

IS THE CONGRESS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MOVEMENT ?

CHAPTER I

GHANDHIJI'S "BIGGEST FIGHT"

Gandhiji, right upto his arrest was declaring "Non-violence" as the basis of his coming movement and he emphatically declared that he would make all endeavours to avoid a clash with the Government. He publicly stated that he fully contemplated sending the Viceroy a letter before taking concrete action. Even the decision of the Congress demanding an immediate ending of the British rule in India was under such circumstances that no other choice was left. Still the people were asked to wait for a programme of action till Gandhiji issued instructions after the decision of the Bombay A.I.C.C.

Gandhiji, in his first speech in the Bombay A.I.C.C., on 7th August, 1942, very emphatically said :

"We must remove hatred for the British from our hearts. At least in my heart there is no such hatred. As a matter of fact I am a greater friend of the British now than I ever was".

On the other hand the British Government of India was preparing elaborately and tenaciously. The machinery was set up to nip "the open revolt" or "Gandhiji's biggest fight of his life" in the bud.

Dr. K. Shridharani has graphically given this in the following words:—

"This time the British went further than ever before in vilifying and black-mailing India's unimpeachable idols and India's freedom movement. It was natural enough. For if they did not tell the biggest lies of their life, the people of America, who were deeply sympathetic toward Indian aspirations, would question the wisdom of the plan being hatched. The best thing they could do under the circumstances was to create the impression, however false that Gandhi was an appeaser, a pro-Japanese, fifth columnist. Since these descriptions would arouse the greatest emotional reaction among Americans, why not use them to blacken Gandhi's otherwise good name ? And that is exactly what they did, these British bureaucrats acting upon the advice of Whitehall. On August 4, 1942, three days before the Bombay meeting of the Congress Committee, and four days before the reign of terror that began with Gandhi's arrest, they released what they called a seized secret document of Gandhiji's original

"quit India" resolution. Those who know India and Gandhi and the Congress party realized that this was a well-timed comic-opera plot for the benefit of Americans, many of whom took it on faith, for a while at least. Now, in the first place, there has never been any need of raiding a Congress office, since one of the basic policies of the Gandhi movement is to have no secrets ; an official could pick up a telephone and call the Congress Secretariate itself to provide the desired copy. In the second place, the Government had "seized" to be precise, but had withheld it until it could be used to impress America. England has been fighting the Battle of India in the United States against Gandhi, not in India against the Japanese.

The allegedly incriminating part of the resolution, later completely changed, was : "If India were freed, her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan." But what the British failed to mention was more important. For the same resolution stated : "The Congress is of the opinion that if the British withdrew from India, India would be able to defend herself in the event of the Japanese, or any aggressor, attacking India." Thus there could never be the slightest doubt about the resolve of the Congress party to resist a Japanese invasion or any other invasion. Gandhi is a man of God : to him no human being is beyond repair. So long as a man is endowed with human nature, he is subject to improvement, which improvement could come either through persuasion or through force. Now this is in direct contrast to the theories of Marxism, which regards the bourgeois as beyond saving. It is also drastically unlike the philosophy of fascism, which bases its belief entirely on force and which regards many races and many nations as sub-human. But it is one of Gandhi's main rules of public conduct that all avenues of negotiation and persuasion should be tried before a break is made. Gandhi has done that with the British, and the very people who were now blackmailing Gandhi had appreciated that in times past. Even this time Gandhi wanted to see the Viceroy and talk things over with him with a view to arriving at a friendly settlement ; it was the Viceroy who refused to negotiate. Gandhi wished to follow the same course with the Japanese, in the hope that he might be able to dissuade them from attacking India and persuade them to get out of China. And he was going to promise them "stubborn resistance," in case the Japanese ignored his humane appeal. May be he was hoping against hope ; but then he was also hoping against hope when he contemplated conference with the British. There was never a question in his mind of appeasing of Japan. That charge

was based on a deliberate falsification of facts by the Tories headed by Churchill.

Here is Nehru's commentary: "Gandhi always sends notice to his adversary before coming into conflict. He would thus have called on Japan not only to keep away from India but to withdraw from China. It is absurd to say that any of us envisaged any arrangement with Japan giving her right of passage". Gandhi is no less emphatic: "I have never, even in a most unguarded moment, expressed the opinion that Japan and Germany would win the war. Not only that, I have often expressed the opinion that they cannot win the war, if only Britain will, once and for all, shed her imperialism."

At the very moment that he was calling on one-fifth of the human race to use direct action to end British Imperialism in India for ever, on August 7, 1942, this greatest statesman and saint of our time had the equanimity to announce: "We must remove the hatred for the British from our hearts. At least, in my heart there is no such hatred. As a matter of fact I am a greater friend of the British now than I ever was.........This is my claim, at which many people may laugh, but all the same, I say this is true." If ever a man has proved himself fit to sit at the head of the coming peace conference, it is Gandhi. No other man, president or prime minister or leader of however powerful a nation, has a greater claim to that honour and responsibility if the coming peace is not going to be another Versailles, and if the new world order is to be founded on justice, equality, freedom, and love which, at its least affirmative, is the absence of hatred and rancour.

This man was made a prisoner within twenty-four hours of his Chirst-like utterance. There ensued a wave of violence, but that was not his plan, not that of the Congress Party. But the nation was deliberately left leaderless by the British. The British have always known how to deal with violence, but they have ever been confounded by non-violence. Look at the history of India of the past quarter-centuary. The real threat to the British authority in India is not of violence—which many times, for that matter, the British themselves have inspired—but the non-violent non-cooperation of the people, the effects of which are increasingly clear as the days go by.

In order to appreciate fully the stand of the Congress Party, it should be brought home in mind that the British Government struck at the Party and its Leaders before civil disobedience started. In fact, Gandhi was hopefully planning further negotiations with the Viceroy, and seeking

mediation from the President of the United States, as the great representative of the greatest western power, from Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek as the head of a great eastern nation, and from Ivan Maisky as the representative of an East-West country. The Moslem President of the Congress, Maulana Azad, was authorized by a formal resolution to make appeal to these three. But the British did not want mediation from outside. They struck before Azad could write the letters or Gandhi could see the Viceroy.

The British propaganda machine cleverly manoeuvred the facts so that Americans would miss this all-important point; the willingness, nay, the insistence of Indian leaders upon reopening the negotiations and mediation from an acceptable but impartial third party. Many of the professional American mouthpieces of the British have been busy misrepresenting the true state of affairs in India and there has followed an unsurpassed campaign of abuse of India's freedom movement in the very country from which India, and the world, have taken their dreams of liberty and democracy. Some went even so far as to interpret Secretary Hull's speech of July 23, 1942, as a rebuke to India. "It has been our purpose," runs Hulls passage in question, "in the past and will remain our purpose in the future—to use the full measure of our influence to support attainment of freedom by all peoples who, by their acts, show themselves worthy of it and ready for it". The whole tone of the speech was that of an exhortation to fight for freedom. Well, India is fighting for her freedom. You cannot blame her for following Secretary Hull's advice!

Gandhiji, in his letter to the Viceroy dated August 12, 1942, said:

"The Government of India were wrong in precipitating the crisis. The Government resolution justifying this step is full of distortions and misrepresentations. That you have the approval of your Indian 'colleagues' can have no significance, except this, that in India you can always command such services. That co-operation is an additional justification for the demand of withdrawal irrespective of what people and parties may say.

"The Government of India should have waited at least till the time I inaugurated mass action. I have publicly stated that I fully contemplated sending you a letter before taking concrete action. It was to be an appeal to you for an impartial examination of the Congress case. As you know, the Congress has readily filled in every omission that has been discovered in the conception of its demand. So could I have dealt with every difficulty if you had given me the

opportunity. The precipitate action of the Government leads one to think that they were afraid that the extreme caution and gradualness with which the Congress was moving towards direct action might make world opinion veer round to the Congress, as it had already begun doing, and expose the hollowness of the grounds for the Government's rejection of the Congress demand. They should surely have waited for an authentic report of my speeches on Friday and on Saturday night after the passing of the resolution by the All-India Congress Committee. You would have found in them that I would not hastily begin action. You should have taken advantage of the interval foreshadowed in them, and explored every possibility of satisfying the Congress demand."

Again in his letter to the Secretary to Government of India, dated September 23, 1942, Gandhiji wrote:—

"In spite of all that has been said to the contrary, I claim that the Congress policy still remains unequivocally non-violent. The wholesale arrest of the Congress leaders seems to have made the people wild with rage to the point of losing self-control. I feel that the Government, not the Congress, were responsible for the destruction that has taken place. The only right course for the Government seems to me to be to release the Congress leaders, withdraw all repressive measures and explore ways and means of conciliation. Surely, the Government have ample resources to deal with any over act of violence. Repression can only breed discontent and bitterness."

Lastly on the question of the alleged violence by Congressmen, Gandhiji wrote in his letter to the Viceroy dated January 29, 1943 as below:—

"But you throw in my face the facts of murders by persons reputed to be Congressmen. I see the fact of murders as clearly, I hope, as you do. My answer is that the Government goaded the people to the point of madness. They started leonine violence in the shape of arrests already referred to. That violence is not any the less so, because it is organised on a scale so gigantic that it displaces the Mosaic law of tooth for tooth by that of ten thousand for one—not to mention the corollary of the Mosaic law, that is, of non-resistance as enunciated by Jesus Christ. I cannot interpret in any other manner the repressive measures of the all powerful Government of India."

Again in the above-quoted letter Gandhiji throw a challenge to the Viceroy which stands till to today unaccepted and unreplied. It runs as below:—

"I have pleaded and would continue to plead till the last

breath that you should at least make an attempt to convince me of the validity of opinion you hold that the August resolution of the Congress is responsible for the popular violence that broke out on August, 9 last and after, even though it broke out after the wholesale arrest of principal Congress workers. Was not the drastic and unwarranted action of the Government responsible for the reported violence ? "

CHAPTER II

THE ATTITUDE OF THE OTHER CONGRESS LEADERS BEFORE THEIR ARREST

The attitude of the Congress and the Congress leaders on the question of India's independence was quite clear. Further it can be very definitely and clearly made out from their press-statements and public speeches which were published from time to time in the papers. The relevant extracts of some of the important Congress leaders' public-statements or speeches are given below :—

PT. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU : In a press statement from Delhi, on 9th April, 1942, Panditji said, "In this world situation fraught with peril it is right that we should consult each other and find a way out to the common advantage of a common cause. But I want to make it clear that we have issued no appeals to anybody or asked for anyone's intervention.

"For my part, I admire President Roosevelt and consider that he has been shouldering a very great burden worthily. I think he will inevitably play a great part in the future. But we have not asked for his intervention in our problems for we realise that the burden is ours and we must shoulder it. We have shouldered it against the might of a great Empire during these last 22 years and we have not bowed down to superior might in spite of pans and penalties.

"We propose to stand erect in future also whatever happens. We realise that the achievement of freedom for India, which we have desired so passionately and worked for during these long years, is our business.

"If we are strong enough to achieve it we shall do so. If not, we shall fall.

"We rely ultimately on ourselves only and on no others, though the co-operation of other in a worthy task is always welcome.

"Col. Louis Johnson has taken a friendly interest in our problem of today and we are grateful to him for it. But it

will be unfair to him and unfair to us to imagine that the burden of any decision or of intervention is cast upon him.

"We have had sufficient experience of British statesmanship in India and elsewhere. Whatever the war may have done there has been little difference in the tone or voice of the most eminent of the British leaders.

"Lord Halifax whom we know well in India still continues to surmonise us of old and tell us how insignificant we are in this great land of India. Perhaps so. Then why trouble about us or come to us with proposals ? Lord Halifax is pleased with what his people have done here. Let him live in his complascent world and leave us to our resources and sorrows.

"But whatever happens we will not give up our objective of independence and complete freedom for India. Our allegiance is to the Indian people and to no one else and in their service and for India's freedom we shall labour and if necessary die."

Again on 10th April, 1942, Panditji in a statement said :—

"In this hour of peril for India many Indians in distant and foreign countries have cabled to me expressing their earnest desire to come back to their homeland in order to share in these perils and dangers in the defence of the motherland from all aggression and invasion.

"I entirely share these sentiments and I am convinced that it is the duty of every Indian who can do so to return to India and face the dangers that threaten us. I trust that those in authority will facilitate this return.

"Whatever the result of the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, the duty of every Indian to serve and defend India utter most remains. We cannot run away from this and seek safety. What safety is there for us if India is in danger ?

"Who lives if India perishes ? India calls and every Indian man and woman must listen to that call. Let each one of us stick to his post of duty whatever befalls.

"Left the old and the infirm and weak of heart think in terms of evacuations and of running away from duty. There is going to be no evacuation for us from this dear country of ours or from one place to another.

"We hold to it till death sever the connection. May we prove worthy of her and of the glorious heritage she has handed down to us."

In Dibrugarh (Assam) on April 20, 1942:

Addressing the crowd that assembled near the Indian evacuee camp, Pandit Nehru said that "grave" situation in Burma had brought the war nearer to Assam.

He added, "Whatever may await us, we shall not bow

to any aggression. As we have not yielded to the British so long, we shall not surrender to the Japanese or the Germans. It is quite natural for the Indians in Burma to return to their homeland under the circumstances created by the war in that country. But where can we go even if those things come to pass in this country".

He advised the people to stay where they were and fight aggression. Indians in Burma complained of atrocities by traitors, but they should have collectively resisted these atrocities rather than yielded to these atrocities individually.

Pandit Nehru did not rule out the possibility of aerial attacks on Indian towns, but observed that sufficient precautions could be taken to minimize their adverse effects.

Concluding, he foreshadowed a time when it would be necessary for every Indian to sacrifice everything for his motherland, and expressed the hope that when that opportunity came, Indians would not be lacking in the spirit to fight for victory.

Another message from Aligarh (U. P.), dated June 30, 1942, runs :—

"We do not want to be slaves of Japan or Germany. We would fight again any nation which wants to enslave us" declared Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, presiding over the second sitting of the District Political Conference.

"The German and Japanese radio", said Pandit Nehru, "announce daily that they are fighting to liberate nations and also that they want to give independence to India. We should never be misled by these announcements. We are ready to defend our county".

Again a Press-Report from Meerut July 18, 1942, says :—

"The only course open to the country is to fight British imperialism in order to increase India's resisting power to fight Fascist aggression," declared Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru addressing a largely attended public meeting at the Town Hall here tonight. He said, "it was better to plunge in the tempestuous wave of fight and get drowned than be inactive."

Pandit Nehru emphasised that Congress had always stood for freedom and democracy and, in consonance with that policy, it had its sympathy with democratic Spain, China and other wronged countries and people.

Pandit Nehru accused England of giving a long rope to Germany and Japan by yielding to the German and Japanese dictators, hoping that the Germans might work against the possibility of Russia being too strong and Japan would work against American's becoming too predominant. The British were only reaping the fruit of their own sowing.

The Pandit went on to say that the country was in a difficult situation. They did not want the Japanese and would fight and defeat them. But they were helpless under the present bureaucratic government. Without a truly national government it was impossible to create the right sort of enthusiasm necessary for the war.

In reply to a question as to what would happen if the English withdrew, the Pandit said that a national government on the basis of agreement between different parties would be established which would carry on the war in alliance, if they so wished, with the English and the Americans.

Pandit Nehru asserted that if India was made independent there would arise tremendous forces which would change the whole face of the war in favour of the Allies.

A Press-Message from Allahabad, August 1st, 1942, says :—

"Struggle—eternal struggle ! That is my reply to Amery and Cripps", said Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru spiritedly criticising the latest statements of Mr. Amery and Sir Stafford Cripps on the Indian situation while addressing a public meeting here in observance of Tilak Day.

"India's national self-respect can not be a matter for bargaining," he added.

"I am galled with sorrow and anger to note that I for years wanted some settlement because I felt that Britain was in trouble. They had their suffering and sorrow. I wanted my country to move forward step in step with them as a free country. But what is one to make of such statements ?

"As far as the British Government were concerned there was no doubt that they had made it impossible for us to settle anything. If there was any doubt in any mind, look at the statements made by Cripps and Amery of late. At this rate our opposition will continue for thousands of years. Our concern was and remains not to hurt our friends—Russia and China."

Towards the close, referring to the flag controversy of the Allahabad University, Pandit Nehru said that it was a big issue. "We have pledged ourselves to the honour of our flag and we will not brook insult to it. But you have your problems and controversies. These differences and controversies should not be magnified at this time because bigger problems are ahead of us and these smaller questions should not be allowed to deviate our attention."

Again a Press-report from Allahabad August 3rd, 1942, runs :—

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru addressing Congress volunteers at Daragunj said : There was no sense in getting frightened when difficulties surrounded them. It was a man's duty to

make use even of adversities and twist them to his advantage. The only way, added Pandit Nehru, to win the war was to inspire the people of India and make them feel that it was their war. He was convinced that the present Government was absolutely useless, incompetent and worthless, and it was not for it to save India. In opposing Britain it was not our purpose to help Japan or Germany. We could not change masters. We would not tolerate any foreign domination and were out to win freedom.

Pandit Nehru told the audience that big things were soon to happen in this country. But the Mahatma's way of fight was non-violent and peaceful. It was not to be forgotten that in opposing a mighty imperialism we would certainly invite brutal repression, but that would never cow us down and we would continue our work effectively. If all the poeple in their departments of work did their little bit then they were bound to succeed. It was true, said the speaker, that there might be some disturbance and even they might be shot down, but the country would pay the price of freedom and would march ahead with a determination worthy of them.

A press message from Bombay August 5th, 1942, says :—

"The reason that impelled the Congress to take its present stand were explained by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru addressing a largely attended meeting at Parel this evening.

"Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said that looking into the march of events in the world the Congress had come to the definite conclusion that no guarantee in regard to the freedom of India at a future date was acceptable. The freedom for which the Congress was fighting was not the freedom for which the country yearned and strove for all these years. Now it was fighting for freedom to survive, to exist and live through the great crisis that had enveloped the world.

"Pandit Nehru referred to the forthcoming meeting of the A. I. C. C. and said that truly it was the most momentous and important session that had been held during the last 25 years. The Working Committee had taken a decision that this country should not live under slavery any longer and that a struggle for freedom should be launched. It was a case of life and death not only for the Congress but for the entire country and would deeply affect the fortunes of the Allies as well as the Axis. He asserted that the step the Congress would take, or had decided to take, would change the whole course of the history of India. It was, indeed, a very grave responsibility that the Congress had taken and he had no doubts about the response of the people of India to the call of the Congress."

He asserted that it was not mere patriotic impulse that forced the issue. It was a very delicate and far-reaching decision that the Congress had taken and he and other members of the Working Committee spent many a sleepless night in thinking over the issue and weighing the pros and cons of the step.

Needless to say, the decision had been arrived at after the most careful and mature thinking. The situation with which the Congress was confronted was not one between Britain and India alone. If it concerned the national freedom of India alone, he would have waited. But it was not so. India's demand was linked up with the freedom of the entire human race. He and his colleagues on the Working Committee were worried, because as a consequence of their step China and Russia would be injured. He had [illegible]sited these countries and he had many friends there. [illegible]new the cause for which they were fighting and sa[illegible]g a great deal. The Congress was very anxious to avoid doing anything which might strengthen the Axis powers, because it was firmly convinced that an Axis victory would mean the perpetuation and continuation of slavery in the world.

All the same, he was not prepared to tolerate the slavery of India. Some people had expressed their surprise that he (Pandit Nehru) should have been a party to the Wardha resolution. There was nothing to be surprised about it. He had consciously and whole-heartedly supported the decision and the Congress was now deliberately plunging into a stormy ocean. The Congress was not in the least afraid of what the British Government might do.

Proceeding, Pandit Nehru said that the concern of the Congress for the democracies led Congress leaders to say incredible things to Sir Stafford Cripps. Japan was sitting at India's frontier. France had fallen and the rest of the democracies were not doing well. The British Government bungled at every stage and disaster was in sight. The cumulative effect on them was that they undertook to do things which normally they would not. He was greatly relieved since the negotiations failed, because he realised that Britain was not willing in the least to shed her imperialism. If Britain has made an honest gesture and liquidated her imperialism, then the whole face of the present situation would have changed. The Congress was not prepared to work within a circumscribed limit and operate only within a ring.

The continuance of the present regime foreshadowed nothing but great misfortune to the whole country and the world. There was an astonishing lack of efficiency and the

events in Malaya, Burma and elsewhere bore testimony to this statement.

The British Empire, Pandit Nehru asserted, was like a castle of cards. There was no parallel in the history of the world where a vast and mighty empire like the British empire suffered losses of such magnitude in so short a time. But, unfortunately, three years of war and reverses and terrible suffering had not taught them anything.

"I would rather have my arms cut off rather than do anything which would harm China," Pandit Nehru continued, "I am prepared to lay down my life for the freedom of India. But what can I do? Do you think we can do anything to help China situated as we are? I am equally determined not to allow myself to be kicked about by two imperialist powers, Britain and Japan. I do not desire that we should somehow secu[illegible] freedom only and preserve it. I want India to be fre[illegible] that she may play her great part in advancing peace and prosperity throughout the world. We have now very rightly decided that it is much better to fight with valour and go down rather than keep quiet."

Proceeding, he said, "Everything points to only one remedy that India should be freed immediately, so that she may face the aggressors whoever they may be. We have been striving for freedom for a number of years and if it had been merely a question of our freedom I would have chosen to wait for months, perhaps years. But the issue today is different. We cannot fight, which we have been asked to do, for a freedom which we do not enjoy. The enthusiasm of the people cannot be whipped up to defend something of which they have no knowledge. Let me emphasise that this is not going to be a struggle for swaraj for its own sake, but a struggle for the sake of facing an imminent danger and to survive. If we keep quiet now, the ineptitude of the Government will embroil us in a hopeless mess and injure the cause of China and Russia."

Pandit Nehru repudiated that he was not in favour of the "Quit India" movement. He was not only wholly in favour of it but had actually been advocating it for a number of years now. His only concern was in regard to the armed forces in India. Their withdrawal would mean the opening of the doors to Japan, but now Mahatma Gandhi had given a satisfactory explanation.

Pandit Nehru made an earnest plea for complete support to Mahatma Gandhi. He assured the audience that it would never be possible for the Japanese to overrun the whole country. It was not possible for them to replace an administrative machinery in this country and it would be equally

SURAT, August 2.

Vallabhbhai Patel addressing a public meeting here said:—

"Let Britain only transfer power to Indian hands whether it is to the Muslim League or any other party, and the Congress is prepared to dissolve itself.

"The Congress could not wait any more because the country can not be defended by dependent people. Now Britain only would be responsible for any state of anarchy that may ensue as a result of the "Quit-India" policy."

Further, he added that the Congress was started with the independence of India as its main and only goal and once that was achieved, the body would willingly cease to function.

The Sardar said that the coming movement would be a comprehensive satyagraha movement im[illegible]g all the methods of satyagraha used by the Congress in [illegible]

B. RAJENDRA PRASAD :

MONGHYR, May 26, 42.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, in the course of a speech at a public meeting here said :—

"The Japanese too, in their turn, have begun assuring us that they are out to liberate India from the hands of our British masters, who had professed at the out-break of the war that theirs was a noble fight waged to ensure 'Freedom of the Nations and to reinstate democracy in the world.' To the former we say ; 'God save us from such friends ? The fate of Korea and Manchuria is a beacon-light of Japanese goodwill.' To the Britishers and their Allies, the Americans, who have sent their soldiers to defend our country, we say :—"Please let us alone and put your professions to practice. Not a drop of human blood need be spilt nor a round of ammunition wasted, and you can free India and rehabilitate democracy and make this country your eternal friend against all aggressions either from the East or the West."

PATNA, July 31, 1942.

"The no-rent campaign of Bardoli, the last individual civil disobedience movement all pale into insignificance before the decision of the Congress to use all its non-violent strength if the "Quit India" demand is not conceded by the British Government", observed Dr. Rajendra Prasad, addressing an emergency meeting of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee, Sadaqut Ashram today.

Explaining the implications of the Wardha resolution, Dr. Rajendra Prasad emphasised that the movement was not to be a mere jail-going business this time.

"Shooting, bombing, confiscation of property—are all possible. Congressmen, therefore, should join the movement with the consciousness that they may be exposed to all these dangers. The new plan of action includes all forms of satyagraha based on pure non-violence. This movement is going to be the last struggle for India's independence. We can face all the armed might of the world with non-violence, the greatest weapon in armoury of satyagraha," he declared.

Dwelling at length on the factors that led the Congress Working Committee to demand the freedom of India first, he said, "it is not an exaggeration to say that the Wardha resolution is the most significant and far-reaching resolution to the whole life of the Congress. Till now the demand for complete independence had been made with some mental reservations. Fa[illegible] opes lingered in the heart that a way out could still be [illegible] for the preservation of Anglo-Indian connections. The [illegible]nt resolution on the other hand, strikes a different note [illegible]ogether."

Britain, he proceeded, "has evaded our demand, so far, on the plea that she cannot transfer power to Indian hands as there is no unity in India. The Congress also had believed that without this unity India cannot attain her goal, but it has now come to the conclusion that there can be no unity until British power disappears. The foreign element in the body politic of the country has created new problems which cannot be easily solved. Mahatma Gandhi, therefore, is now of the definite opinion that there can be no unity in India without Swaraj, though he once held the reverse view. This opinion is the result of bitter experiences and the outcome of the Cripps Mission.

"The assertion that the Congress will use all its non-violent strength to secure the freedom of India has spread consternation in the world. Britain and America say that the Congress move is preposterous. Germany and Japan appear to be pleased and displeased with it. They are pleased because they think it will hamper the British war effort. They are displeased because they find it envisages resistance to all foreign powers—the British and the Axis powers.

"In the life of every nation a time comes when it has to take a great and far-reaching step. It was so when Hitler decided to start the war. Similar was the case when America, England and other countries resolved to plunge into the world conflict. The people are called upon in these countries to sacrifice everything, including life, in response to the call of their leaders. The Congress, too, has reached a decision of great significance".

Concluding Dr. Rajendra Prasad affirmed that the Congress had no quarrel with anyone. It only hoped to convert its opponents by its suffering and sacrifice. He was confident that their opponents would join them in the great cause of Indian freedom.'

Pt. Govind Ballabh Pant :

CAWNPORE, JULY 10.

Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, addressing a public meeting yesterday evening declared :—

"We cannot effectively defend our country unless we are a free nation."

After a rapid review of the situation since the outbreak of the war, in so far as it affected India, Pt. Pant asserted that India must become independent [illegible]e she could take part in the fight for the cause of [illegible]racy. We could not afford to miss the present opp[illegible] to gain freedom and organise ourselves to defen[illegible]. The war had now approached the frontiers of India and we had to prepare ourselves to meet every eventuality. We could not afford to postpone the issue of the country's freedom any longer. To do so would be to ignore to our peril the lessons we ought to learn from the neighbouring countries that had lost their freedom.

Proceeding, Pandit Pant said that soon after the outbreak of the war, India was asked to help Britain and her Allies in the fight for democracy, but how could India fight for the preservation of other countries when freedom was being denied her ? India could help the Allies effectively only when her independence was recognised and conceded by the British Government. Sir Stafford Cripps, however, had made it clear that the British Government had no intention to transfer real power to Indian hands during the continuance of the war. It had also been made plain to us that we would have no real control over Indian defence. The duty of Indians was, therefore, quite clear. We had now to redouble our efforts to secure freedom. Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress Working Committee had issued instructions and it behoved us to respond to the call and prepare ourselves for the struggle.

Pt. Pant declared that its was absurd to expect any country, whatever its professions, to help them in gaining freedom. He wanted Indians to place no reliance on assurances of those who said they would grant India freedom. We must remember that such false assurances would be of no avail. India had no sympathy whatsoever with aggressor nations, but she could effectively help the Allies in the present struggle only when she was free.

Concluding, Pandit Pant Paid a tribute to the bravery and heroism of the Chinese and asked Indians to emulate their example.

BAREILLY, JULY 26, '42.

"The Congress exists for the people and will fight for the people", Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, in the course of a speech, at a public meeting held here last evening observed.

Referring to the proposed mass struggle, Pandit Pant said: "Mahatma Gandhi's plans, which are in a fluid state today will take shape after the Bombay session of the A. I. C. C. I appeal to my countrymen to respond to the Congress call."

ACHARYA KRIPALANI :

BENARES, JULY 30.

Acharya Krip[illegible]ddressing the students of the Hindu University said :—

"The British Gov[illegible]ent have mischievously misrepresented the Congress view point with regard to the demand for National Government as a demand for abdication in favour of the Congress, utterly disregarding the minorities.

"The Congress, far from asking power for itself," he said, "would be glad if the British Government asked Mr. Jinnah or the Muslim League, Mr. Savarkar or the Hindu Mahasabha, or Dr. Ambedkar to form a true National Government, absolutely free from British control. Britain has made no such offer because she wants to keep the Indian pie for herself.

"British statesmen are inadvertently playing the Axis game by denying freedom to India and giving excellent material for propaganda for the consumption of Indians".

Referring to Gandhiji's contemplated move, Kripalani said: "Gandhiji has been compelled to contemplate a mass movement to resist hardships resulting from war measures, because it would mean schooling the masses in resisting actual invasion by Axis Powers if it should come. Gandhiji's move will greatly help the Allied cause. Time servers and sycophants would welcome the aggressor as they did in Malaya and Burma ; but good men and true, with courage of their conviction, would along put up a valiant fight".

Continuing Kripalani said: "It is shameful for Sir Stafford Cripps, with his revolutionary antecedents, to appeal to America to help the British Government in suppressing India's struggle for liberty. If Americans lend their support to this unholy cause, they will be writing the blackest chapter in their history unworthy of George Washington's and Abraham Lincoln's glorious heritage".

From the above quoted speeches and statements of the prominent leaders and members of the Congress Working Committee, it can be clearly seen that the central and supreme idea in their minds was to organise "effective defence of India" and thus to avert the fate of Malaya, Singapore, Rangoon and Burma, in India. With this end in view, independence of India and formation of provisional National Government was desired. There was definite and distinct declaration of opposition to Japan or any other aggressor and positive sympathy with China and Russia. There was absolutely no pro-Japanese tendency in the expressions or minds of the Indian Congress Leaders. Besides no plan or programme for the coming movement was expressed by any one of them. Of course, every one laid a great emphasis on the non-violent character of the move[illegible] and invited the people to join it with preparedness o[illegible]ng supreme sacrifices and sufferings.

Really speaking there was no p[illegible] programme known to any of the Congress leaders and every one of them was entirely depending on when Gandhiji was to guide and give lead. This was the attitude of one and all of the Congress Leaders.

CHAPTER III

THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE CONGRESSMEN IN GENERAL

What Gandhiji expressed and explained was the all that the Congress leaders knew. What Congress leaders could say was the knowledge of the Congressmen in general. Nobody from the top laid down any definite detailed programme for the Congressmen in general on which they had to work. Thus everybody was anxiously awaiting for orders and instructions from the above that "above" was the light which Gandhiji was to receive and impart just at the time when he actully was to call upon the people to any action.

Before the Bombay session of the A.I.C.C. everybody's attention was rivetted on that momentous session. At Bombay all those Congressmen who went there tried to know the programme. They asked their provincial leaders and in their turn their leaders asked Gandhiji and Gandhiji could get no time and opportunity till he was arrested on the early hours of the 9th August, 1942.

Thus Gandhiji and with him almost all the other Congress-Leaders were arrested before they could unfold and explain the plan and programme of action. Some of those who were left out did try to sit together to draw out a scheme of work but under what circumstances and influences they conferred

and planned is well known. Everywhere the Congressmen were being arrested, presses, public meetings, processions and other public activities were forcibly stopped. Lathi-Charge, flogging, shooting etc., were becoming very common. Thus in the words of Gandhiji Government took the "precipitate action" and "the wholesale arrest of the Congress-leaders seems to have made the people wild with rage to the point of losing self-control".

The popular psychic influence worked tremendously even on Congressmen. They, in place of giving lead to the masses were virtually led by the them. They could neither check the popular enthusiasm nor could divert and direct it into any other way but the one towards which it drifted. The natural and common reaction of the Government action on the mind of the people c[illegible] nothing else under such extraordinarily provocative circ[illegible]ces but the one of "maddening them". They lost self-c[illegible] and lacked any guidance, naturally things happened [illegible] unorganised and undesired manner. An average Congressman was not prepared to face such a situation. He failed to control and guide the people. The leader and influential Congressmen were already clapped in the jail. Thus when the popular feeling could not be checked or diverted the Congressmen left outside the jails could do nothing else but play the passive role under the circumstances creatad by the hasty and precipitate action of the Government. Some of the Congressmen were put in a fix and were arrested while actually doing nothing. Some others were arrested, prosecuted and persecuted while they were actually hiding themselves and avoiding any work. Still some others fell victim of the circumstances and were held responsible for directly or indirectly participating in the popular activities of the time that is of cutting telegraph wires, setting fire to post boxes etc., removing railway lines, and other such activities. Still some others tried to take out peaceful processions and organize peaceful demonstrations etc., but their attempts were brutally frustrated by indiscriminate firing and lathi-charge etc. The reaction of all this was that such Congressmen could not effectively attract and divert the excited popular attention. But this goes without doubt that the Congressmen in general did not organize nor openly participate in any of the activities of the period. It is because of this that "popular revolt" or "open rebellion" could be suppressed so swiftly and successfully by the brutally tyrannical machinery set up by the Government to deal with it.

Most of the Congressmen if can be charged of anything it is only of in-action or no-action for which the only plea which

can be advanced in their defence is that they were not kept prepared, rather kept for a long time under discipline of "No-action" by their leader Gandhiji since the out-break of the present war. Thus when time for action came even then they actually did "No-action" violent or non-violent.

CHAPTER IV

HOW THE GENERAL PUBLIC BEHAVED

In the previous chapter we have also dealt as to the public-reaction to the Government action on the 9th August, 1942 and after. The general public in India is a mass of people unarmed and untrained in any sort of modern war-fare. Under the arms act they [illegible] prohibited to keep what of fire-arms even a lo[illegible]e-knife. They are thus reduced to such a state t[illegible] can not defend themselves from violent-wild beas[illegible]rmed dacoits. Even at this during that period th[illegible]e prohibited from carrying in their hands ordinary lathis or bamboo sticks while moving out of their houses. The Indian masses were, from the very advent of the British rule in India, being systematically trained to impotency. They are now virtually harmless-creatures and can be subjected to any sort of treatment without any protest or retaliation from them. Hence even the gravest of provocation of the nature which the Government of India gave to them by arresting all their leaders and subsequently by snatching all their civic rights by sheer brutal force, they could react so "mildly" that despite their such a large number they could do so little that the Government could not only exist and do, not only all the atrocities which so far the human history has recorded but much more.

The Indian people or the Indian masses simply burst up to express their feelings, violent they could not be as they were left with no means to be so and non-violent they could not remain under the circumstances created by the Government. How actually the Indian people behaved is something really difficult to describe in the commonly understood language. However, the behaviour of the Indian people was an earnest, honest and very natural attempt to indicate that they were alive and not dead. What actually they did was something so little that they could be charged of doing not only "no harm" to their oppressors but doing wrong to themselves by reacting so softly and so mildly. They deserve pity and pity alone. But alas! they were treated by the christian Government, as Gandhiji has said:

"The Government goaded the people to the point of

madness. They started leonine violence in the shape of the arrests already referred to. That violence is not any the less so, because it is organised on a scale so gigantic that it displaces the Mosaic Law, that is, of non-resistance as enunciated by Jesus Christ. I cannot interpret in any other manner the repressive measures of all-powerful Government of India.".

CHAPTER V

GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE HAPPENINGS IN AUGUST 1942 AND AFTER

The Government case is very well put by Mr. L. S. Amery, the Secretary o[illegible] for India, in his speech in the House of Commons o[illegible] [M]arch, 1943.

Mr. Amery said:

"The resolut[illegible]re the House concern only six out of 11 provinces o[illegible] In the remaining five provinces Indian Ministers responsible to the Indian legislatures control a vast majority of the subjects affecting the daily life of their fellow citizens.

"It is only in the provinces controlled by the Congress Party's organization that self-government was suspended by the order of the so-called High Command of the Congress Party in October 1939, and the Governors had been compelled to shoulder direct responsibilities of Government. They do so under the provisions of Section 93 of the Government of India Act. These are emergency provisions and as such properly come before this House for a periodic review. I need not add that they are also under constant review by the Viceroy and the Governors concerned. In two provinces where the Ministries were originally ordered out by the Congress dictatorship, self-government has been resumed. A resumption of self government in the other provinces can take place whenever Ministers can be found in a position to conduct affairs and co-operate in the war effort. The door remains open and the whole situation remains under constant review.

"The origin of the situation and the reasons for its present continuance can only be understood in the light of the nature and policy of the Congress Party. Originally democratic in its organization and constitutional in its methods, the Congress Party has progressively become a dictatorship aiming at the expulsion by revolutionary, though professedly non-violent methods, of the existing British Raj and its supersession by a Congress Raj. For a detailed story of the evolution I can only commend to the House the masterly objective survey

of the last seven years of Indian politics embodied in the second volume of Professor Coupland's report to the Nuffield Trust. For myself I will only go back over the past sufficiently to make the events of the recent months intelligible. The particular character and methods of the Congress Party have largely been shaped by a single man, Mr. Gandhi. I shall not attempt here to assess the qualities of this remarkable and enigmatic personality. Many members have no doubt read the recent book "Grey Eminence" in which Aldous Huxley describes the combination in one person, Father Joseph De Tramblay, of a devout mystic with an unscrupulous political adviser who helped Cardinal Richelieu to keep Europe distracted by a generation of disastrous war.

"It is enough for me to say that M[illegible]ndhi's peculiar appeal to the Hindu veneration for the [illegible] helped to make him the unquestioned dictator—a per[illegible]uper-President', to use Pandit Nehru's description—o[illegible]he largest, best financed and most rigidly drilled p[illegible]nization in India. In the provincial elections of 1937 the Congress Party secured 711 out of 1,585 seats. This was less than a majority even in British India. But it was enough to give the party an absolute majority in five provinces and control in three others. This unexpected result would seem to have intoxicated the Congress Party Leaders with a sense of new-found power. Overriding and ignoring the growing intensity of the opposition which they were piling up in India itself, they persuaded themselves that they and they alone were India. Only a relatively small effort, so it seemed to them, was still required to displace British rule at the Centre and for the Congress Party, to use Mr. Gandhi's phrase, to 'take delivery'. The imminence of war came as a shock not only to Mr. Gandhi's sincere pacifism but also to those dreams of early power. At the first sign of the preparation to meet the coming danger Congress members were ordered to boycott the Assembly. In their absence the Central Legislature unquestioningly accepted the brief statement in which Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, as the Leader of the House, declared that all present were determined to do their duty to the King and Country. The far-reaching provisions of the Defence of India Act were passed without a division. The Ministries and Legislatures of the Punjab, Bengal and Sind endorsed the attitude of the Central Legislature as did the Mahasabha and Liberal Parties. The Princes of India, both individually and afterwards by a unanimous vote of the Chambers of Princes, vindicated their traditional loyality to the King-Emperor by their pledges and actions. The part which India has played in the war is known to all the world. It is as well that I

should remind the House of these facts. They are a conclusive answer to the wholly untruthful legend promulgated by the Congress Party and since, I regret to say, only too readily swallowed outside—the legend of a reluctant India dragged into a war in which she had no choice and in whose issues she felt no concern. During the next few weeks Lord Linlithgow strove with unwearying patience to persuade the Congress leaders to co-operate with the Government and with the leaders of other parties to support the war effort. The only answer was the summary edict of the 'High Command' suspending self-government in the Congress Party governed provinces.

"In the following August the Viceroy issued a far-reaching declaration whic[illegible]ffect pledged us to the acceptance at the earliest possible [illegible] after the war India's completely free and equal p[illegible]p in the British family of nations under a constitut[illegible]r own devising. At the same time *it invited party* [illegible] the strength of the pledge to co-operate in the w[illegible]rt by joining the Viceroy's Executive. Mr. Gandhi and his colleagues contemptuously refused even to discuss the offer and Mr. Gandhi followed up the refusal by launching a campaign of individual protest against India's participation in the war.

"That campaign proved a complete fiasco and petered out in the course of 1941.

"In March last year the Minister of Aircraft Production, Sir Stafford Cripps went out to India. The proposals he was charged to explain were so far-reaching, so generous and so explicit that at one time it seemed almost inconceivable that they could be rejected. Even within the ranks of the Congress Working Committee influential elements were known to be strongly in favour of acceptance. Why then were they rejected ? For two reasons. The first was the same reason as that which had led to contemptuous rejection of the declaration of August, 1940. It was the assumption underlying both the declarations that India can only be free under a constitutional system arrived at by agreement between main elements in her national life. Both, in fact, denied the Congress Party's claim to 'take delivery' of India at our hands.

"The vast Congress demands took the form of the immediate setting up of a National Government with full Cabinet powers and it was an attempt to snatch that delivery. Sir S. Cripps was bound to reject it, for 'acceptance would have wrecked all prospect of agreement with the minorities. There was, however, another and at the moment perhaps

even a 'stronger' reason for the rejection. What was that moment ? It was the moment of our worst defeat in the East. The Cripps Mission was announced by the Prime Minister on March 11, three days after the fall of Rangoon. While negotiations were in progress the Japanese were advancing rapidly. Not only Ceylon but India's coastal ports suffered bombing raids which looked like the harbingers of far worse to come for the great cities of Eastern India. It never occurred to us here that there was any connection between the event and the sending of Sir S. Cripps. For Mr. Gandhi the connection would seem to have been only too obvious. In his eyes the Cripps Mission was the hoisting of a distress signal—a belated appeal to the Congress to commit itself to a war policy which could only hel[illegible]ng upon India the horrors of invasion. Our offer w[illegible]im nothing more than—I quote his own words—a [illegible]ted cheque on a falling bank.

"During the week that follo[illegible]jection of our proposal a week of continuous reverses in Burma, Mr, Gandhi concentrated all his efforts on a campaign by which the British Government in India was to be forced to quit India and hand over the control of the continent to such a Government as might or might not emerge or abandon it to anarchy. How far he really believed the Government of India could be forced to surrender in view of the precariousness of the military situation or how far he was mainly concerned with reinsuring the Congress with victorious Japanese invaders it is impossible to say.

"The House will have read in the White Paper Mr. Gandhi's original draft resolution of last April which began with the conclusion "Britain is incapable of defending India" and free India's first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan. It will also have followed the successive stages by which the original resolution was modified in deference to those elements like Pandit Nehru who were not only committed by their sincerely expressd past utterances to sympathy with China and Russia but were more alive to the desirability of conciliating opinion here and in the United States. With the one exception, however, of Mr. Rajgopalachari whose earnest and prophetic letter of "Appeal to Mr. Gandhi", I hope, has been read by every member, the doubting members of the Working Committee seem to have been content with the facade of the resolution.

"What is more significant is that they seem to have acquiesced in its concession from a general demand that contained in the resolution of July 14 last. This demand was to be enforced by a campaign of mass civil disobedience

or to use Mr. Gandhi's own words, "by open rebellion." They did endorse the demand that there should be an open rebellion unless their claim was admitted.

"On Aug. 8, the All-India Congress Committee gave definite endorsement and sanction to the rebellion. It may help to understand all that lay behind the decision when I remind the House that the month which preceded it had seen us driven in retreat within fifty miles of Alexandria and recorded the fall of Rostov and imminent threat to Stalingrad and Caucasus while only the monsoon shortly to break seemed to............ India and a Japanese invasion.

"Happily there was better and sterner stuff in India than the Congress lead[illegible]ckoned. Not only India but the whole Allied cause owe[illegible]debt of gratitude to these Indian members of the [illegible] Executive whose swift and resolute decision to arre[illegible]ganisers of mischief caused the rebellion to go o[illegible]k. It owes no less to the loyal civil servants, Ind[illegible]men and soldiers who stood faithful to their trust through the anxious and trying weeks which followed and to the vast majority of the Indian public, Hindu as well as Muslim, who stood aloof and even gave their active support to the authorities.

"With the actual character and course of the Congress rebellion I dealt at some length in the debate in October last. The whole subject is dealt with comprehensively and conclusively in the White Paper. If there are members who having studied the White Paper can still believe that a really non-violent movement of national protest was all that was ever intended or that Mr. Gandhi cannot have nay illusions as to the nature of the conflagration which he was determined to spread all over India, I have really nothing to say to them, nor is there anything I can say to those who are still prepared to argue that a concentrated and skilled attack upon vital sectors of strategical communications and upon all Goverment buildings, associated as they were both physically and in public estimate with the Congress Party, were merely a spontaneous manifestation of public indignation at the arrest of popular political leaders.

"There is a limit to credulity and no one who has taken pains to go through the White Paper can remain in doubt as to what was intended and what was in fact attempted. The case against Mr. Gandhi and his associates is overwhelming. I have seen it asserted in certain quarters that the white Paper is a mere case for the prosecution unsupported by evidence required for conviction. It is a statement of facts, many of them elicited in the course of investigation before courts. These facts have not been arranged to obtain

conviction for there has been no trial still less conviction of Congress leaders. But they are abundant justification for the Government of India's decision to detain the leading mischief-makers in innocuous isolation. I say additional justification, for I must remind the House that the declared decision of the All-India Congress Committee was to paralyse the administration at a moment of grave national peril by a campaign of mass disobedience. That was ample justification and would have been ample if not a single drop of blood had been shed or a single rail torn up. Flickering remnants of the conflagration still occur sporadically. The need for watchfulness remains, but, broadly speaking I think it can be said that the Cong[illegible]'s rebellion has been successfully dealt with by the G[illegible]nt of India and the Provincial Government concern[illegible]

"Since then there has been th[illegible] epilogue of Mr. Gandhi's fast to capacity, happ[illegible] in that *respect*, happily unsuccessful in the attemp[illegible] coerce the Government of India into granting his release by the creating of an emotional crisis. It is to be regretted that three members of the Viceroy's Executive, men who had done eminent public service and not the least in dealing with the troubles last autumn, should have allowed themselves to be swayed by that emotional crisis. Their places, I understand, will be filled in the near future by no less capable Indian Public-men. There is no going back upon the expansion of the Council which Mr. Aney, one of the resigning members, has since his resignation described as an outstanding reform offering enough scope for solid service to the Indian people by Indian members even under the existing system and still more by conventions which steadily and slowly grow up.

"To return to Mr. Gandhi, I understand, the Viceroy has agreed to receive a deputation arising out of the recent meeting of the Non-Party Leaders in Bombay. These leaders apparently wish to suggest that Mr. Gandhi may now be disposed to be more reasonable if allowad to contact with his detained Congress followers and with political leaders outside. I think the full account which I have given to the House of Mr. Gandhi's attitude and of his party throughout the war culminating in the reckless and defeatist action of last year must have convinced the House how difficult and indeed dangerous it would be to consider any concession of that nature in the absence of the most explicit assurances and effective guarantees of the complete change of attitude and conduct on the part of those who have brought so much unhappiness upon India and might be still capable of so much danger to the whole Allied cause in those future

operations for which India must be a base. I can only say that no sign of any such change of heart in Mr. Gandhi can be traced in his recent correspondence with the Viceroy. Where do we stand ? Is there no conciliatory gesture, no sympathetic initiative which might serve to break the deadlock, if not with the Congress leaders, at any rate, as between the other Indian parties ? I do not believe it is fair either to Lord Linlithgow who has been unwearied in endeavouring to bring the parties together or to the other parties themselves or even to the Congress Party to suggest that the deadlock is something which can be resolved by more sympathetic handling or some happy expedient which may have been overlooked [illegible]ming last year's declaration. The differences are far t[illegible]d far too sincerely held. Mr. Jinnah on the one sid[illegible] leaders of the Mahasabha on the other, to take tw[illegible] points of view, are each contending for what th[illegible]ions behind them believe to be vital princip[illegible] in their present mood and situation as they see it they can find no compromise.

"The Hindu majority of all parties, the Congress, the Mahasabha and the Liberals are substantially agreed on one thing—in insisting upon the maintenance of the unity of India at least for the most essential common purposes. The Muslim attitude was clearly and unequivocally defined by the Muslim League's Secretary and spokesman in the recent debate in the Assembly when he declared: "The Muslims in India will never accept any form of Central Government which will place them at the mercy of the majority community". Are their points of view really incompatible ? They have not proved incompatible so long as the ultimate control has rested with the impartial authority of this House. Are they really and necessarily incompatible under that democratic freedom which not only the Indian parties but all parties in this House wish India to enjoy ?

"The conclusion to which I have personally been driven by my own contact with this problem over the last three years is that the problem is not insoluble. But it cannot be solved unless we and still more India can get away from the idea that there is only one sealed pattern of democracy, namely, the particular form of parliamentary executive which we have developed in this country. I believe with all my heart that ours is the best type of democracy in the world—the most flexible and yet also the strongest and most durable.

"But it can only exist in a relatively homogeneous country where free discussion can convert the minority of to-day into the majority of tomorrow and where a strong tradition of national unity and parliamentary give and take

transcends the exigencies of party passion and the dictatorship of party organization. Imposed as the Central Government of a continent so deeply divided as India the system would only mean the tyranny of an immovably permanent majority or else the alternative of disruption. Would any one dream of making our system the basis of a Federal Government for Europe? Let me quote Switzerland with its three separate races. Switzerland lives in happy unity under one of the most democratic federal constitutions in the world, but one under which no one race or party can secure the control of the executive. I wonder whether Switzerland could have hoped under our system to have escaped the contagion of nationalist conflict outside our b[illegible].

"Twenty-five years ago this Hous[illegible] itself to the progressive attainment of responsible Go[illegible] for India. We intended it then and we intend it ev[illegible] and more immediately today that India should liv[illegible] vernment responsible not to Parliament here, [illegible] under her own constitution. But what we have [illegible] assumed and what we have led India to assume was that this Government would necessarily be our own particular type. The nearer we have come the fulfilment of our pledge the more acute has become the internal deadlock in India. The experience of responsible Government in the provinces as controlled by a totalitarian Hindu oligarchy has enormously accentuated it.

"Our recent declarations have only widened the breach and yet I firmly believe that there may be more than one road.

"Like wasps buzzing angrily up and down a window pane when the adjoining window may be wide open we are all held up frustrated and irritated by the unrealized but insuperable barrier of our constitutional prepossessions.

"If only our mind and, above all, the mind of India could emerge from the rut of our accustomed lines and look for fresh constructive solutions wherever they may be borrowed from and adapted to India's conditions. I am optimistic enough to believe that the necessary way round the present deadlock may be found and perhaps found more rapidly than now seems possible. It is for the Indians themselves to find the way. They alone can find a solution, for it is only when they have found it for themselves that they will be minded to make it succeed.

"There is only one thing more I want to add. The House has been very good to be ashamed of our past-record. It has, I think given me credit for attempting to make such progress as difficult circumstances have allowed.

"It has, I hope, given me credit for endeavouring to

maintain a positive and constructive outlook in the face of baffling and bewildering problem. So I trust it will bear with me in what I am now going to say. We have no reason to be ashamed of our past record in India. Never, if I may venture to echo certain great words used by Prime Minister in a different context—never have so few done so much for the happiness of so many, done so much to dispel fear and alleviate want, as was done for the tolling millions of India by a handful of British administrators in the last centuary. The work was done it is true, within the limitations of the outlook of that age as well as the local conditions in India of that time. But it was good and enduring work for all that. It suc[illegible]se those who did it believed in their task [illegible]nd b[illegible]elves and because we who sent them be[illegible]elves and had faith in our mission in the [illegible]elieved in our mission India believed [illegible]

[illegible]very different age. We are dealing [illegible]y different India. Our own outlook on all these [illegible] Government and racial relationships has under[illegible] rightly undergone, a profound change. Have we brought into the new age the same faith or the same confident vision that inspired the earlier generation ? There was inspiration, and no one can deny it, in the old vision of a beneficient paternal empire. How much more splendid, more inspiring is the vision of a commonwealth of free nations freely associated in equal partnership, regardless of all differences of race or creed, but a partnership, and what is more, a lead to the world, in all good living, in all right thinking, in all generous striving.

If we have failed to inspire India with that vision, if our response to Indian nationalism has looked to Indians too much like reluctant yielding to pressure, if our desire to keep India within the Commonwealth has seemed to them a mere instinct of hanging on to some last indefinite shred of past authority, may it not be due to the fact that we have not ourselves realised sufficiently clearly and vividly the vision of a united commonwealth ? How can we expect Indians to share the vision of a united commonwealth in all the range of its opportunity, in all the breadth of its freedom if—I hope I may be allowed to quote the lines of Francis Thompson —It is we, it is our estranged faces that miss many splendoured things.

"As for faith, surely what we in this little island, what we of this loosely bound yet amazingly coherent commonwealth, this youngest yet infinitely hopeful experiment is supernational co-operation, that we have already shown to

the world in the darkest hours of the present struggle—sure that should give us faith in ourselves and in the ideas and possibilities of that Commonwcalth in facing the task before us.

"Of those tasks there is none that can compare in its importance, to every member of our Commonwealth as well as to the future peace of Asia and of the world, with a solution on stable and enduring basis of this great and difficult problem of India. We cannot solve it by shirking our responsibilities to the peoples of India and to Allied cause, while the enemy is at India's gates. We can only help to solve it by our continuing good wi[illegible] our active interest in India and by our enco[illegible] every effort that Indians may make to fin[illegible] their present deadlock, above all it may [illegible] them some measure of our commonw[illegible] future."

The Congress position is clear[illegible] cally declared by Mrs. Sarojini N[illegible] Congress Working Committee at a press confe[illegible] Delhi on 25th. January, 1944, which runs as below[illegible]

"Dealing first with waverers and the half-heart[illegible] Congressmen, she declared that she would give freedom of thought to everyone just as she wanted it for herself but for people who had publicly endorsed the Congress decision, it was extremely undesireable, it was disloyal, while the leaders were in jail, to undermine the integrity of the Congress by action which was certainly not in accordance with the Congress decision.

"She emphatically repudiated the suggestions that the out-break of violence in India was in accordance with Congress plans and that the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi were pro-Japanese.

"If anybody has the audacity to continue saying it, it will be scurrilous,it will be a lie",she said."I can tell you authoritatively as the only member of the Working Committee outside jail, that so far from being pro-Japanese we have been consistently against any form of foreign invasion, no matter what label it may bear, because we have had quite enough of foreign invasions. There are no two opinions among us on this."

Mrs. Naidu revealed that about the end of May, 1942, Miraben who was in Orissa looking after the evacuees, sent Mahatma Gandhi a report of her work and along with that report a questionnaire asking what should be the attitude of the Indian people if the authorities got into a scare about the possibility of some kind of invasion from the East. Mahatma Gandhi dictated a letter in reply to the questionnaire. He

gave the fullest instructions in the most uncompromising manner and he declared that there should be no compromise, no trade, no barter and acquiescence and no co-operation with the invader.

Mrs. Naidu herself came to know of this letter at the time of the fast. At that time there was renewed propaganda about Mahatma Gandhi being pro-Japanese and Miraben being used as a messenger and so on.

Miraben then wrote a letter to Viceroy saying that as an English-[illegible]n she was ashamed of the lying campaign in w[illegible]d been brought in. She also enclosed a c[illegible]nnaire and Mahatma Gandhi's reply. But s[illegible]ledgement from the Viceroy.

[illegible] proposed soon to print the whole of [illegible]eply. "They would prove", she said, [illegible]ing Committee have always been [illegible] anti-anybody that tried to invade u[illegible] of aggression, as we are against a[illegible]omination. That is the position of the Working C[illegible]

[illegible], I believe," she continued, "that owing to this fam[illegible] Bengal, the misery of the people, the masses who do not know the difference between a Hottenlot and Zulu, a Chinese or a Russian, might feel that anybody who helped them is welcome. Possibly in Bengal that is the attitude. I do not know. It is a great danger. We must fight it. But, as far as the thinking people, the Congressmen and Mahatma Gandhi are concerned, there is going to be no quarter asked."

Questioned about the allegation that Mahatma Gandhi pulled the strings from behind from Wardha and prevented the Working Committee from accepting the Cripps proposals, Mrs. Naidu declared: "After Gandhiji left Delhi, we had no communication with him, to my certain knowledge. Mahatma Gandhi," she added, "had told the Working Committee to do exactly as it liked and declared he would not interfere in the slighest with any decision they might arrive at."

Mrs. Naidu described the efforts made during the Cripps negotiations to bring Mr. Jinnah and Mahatma Gandhi together and referred to the letter that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad wrote to Mr. Jinnah a day before the arrest of the Congress leaders.

An American correspondent asked whether the failure to bring the two together did not strengthen argument that the communal question was insoluble. Mrs. Naidu replied that the communal problem was after all only a matter of what she called "vulgar fractions". "The common sufferings of

the people, the food question these were softening communal differences. Those who said that the communal problem was insoluble did not know psychology or the pressure of history. Provided the will for a settlement was there, the communal problem was capable of solution and she felt it was going to be solved."

What did she think was the way out of the present position as between the Government and the Congress asked a correspondent, Mrs. Naidu replied that Mahatma Gandhi's letter to the Viceroy contained an opening. [illegible] Mahatma had said there was no reason to withdraw [illegible] had done, but he asked Viceroy to sen[illegible] knew the Government's mind and co[illegible] wrong, and having convinced him [illegible] Working Committee.

Why, she asked, were Sir Tej Ba[illegible] Mr. Rajgopalacharia and Mr. [illegible] Mahatma Gandhiji ?

A correspondent asked what was her reac[illegible] tion in the country from her study of it duri[illegible] months ?

"My reaction," she replied "is that the deadlock can be solved if the Government wants to resolve it. Waverers have increased in the country, because they never have been very strong. I have seen hunger, death, disease, [illegible] the result of wrong policies, the misery and bitterness of the people are enormously greater than when we went to jail".

"To some extent the people have lost their fear of the Japanese invasion," she said ; "I think the people are much more sullen in their resentment, much more bitter and any vestige of faith they had has gone. The food situation and happenings in Burma have done much to destroy the legendary prestige of the British Government. Now is the occasion for Government to rectify past mistakes with the right gesture. We have made our gestures. I think it is possible to find some way to make a breach in the wall if they would let people meet and talk to Gandhiji and let him meet the Working Committee and find out for himself what they thought and what was happening in the country."

"On fundamentals" she went on to declare, "We cannot surrender. I would rather that every one of us died in jail than that merely for the sake of coming out we should compromise the integrity of our position. We have spoken in the name of the nation. We cannot go back on it till we are convinced we are wrong."

"She reiterated that Gandhiji never intended to start any movement. The idea was that failing negotiations, some

action might or would be taken and that was left to some future time."

"We discussed nothing in the Working Committee in the way of instructions or programme" she said, "if anybody says now that the Congress Working Committee or Gandhiji, especially Gandhiji, even by implication, by gesture, hint or blinking of the eyelash, suggested to anybody that violence was to be part of the programme, that person, Government or group ar[illegible] propagandists and to use an impolite word, liars."

Mrs [illegible] revealed that when the Government issued t[illegible] wrote to Sir Richard Tottenham challeng-i[illegible] ut the Working Committee having had [illegible] iolence. She referred in the letter to [illegible] on the part of the Government [illegible] d melodramatic arrests. "The Govern-[illegible] fectly aware that the centres of incite-[illegible] ith the Congress High Command."

S[illegible] she had been connected with the [illegible] ittee [illegible] twenty years and she knew they had n[illegible] ated, endorsed or condoned any programme or ac[illegible] nce whether by individuals or groups or Govern-ments. During the war, she had stated in the letter, while adhering strictly to the Congress position of non-violence for attaining internal independence, the Working Committee had [illegible] anxious to come into line with the United Nations and give them cooperation, which it could give only on terms of perfect equality. The Committee was opposed to any kind of aggression, from east or west. If it was a crime to love liberty, the Working Committee was guilty in association with China and other nations who were fighting to gain or regain or retain freedom. She finally threw a definite challenge to the declaration that the Wörking Committee had anything, whatever, to do with violence.

That letter, she said, was shown to Mahatma Gandhi and was sent on February 14, 1943, on the fourth day of his fast and she only got an acknowledgement.

Asked about the slogan "Do or Die" she made it clear that it could not possibly mean anything other than do or die within the limitations of non-violence. "On the day that Mahatma Gandhi broke his fast, Dr. B. C. Roy asked catagori-cal questions to him about the allegations regarding his attitude to violence. Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his letter asked, 'Do you think that after preaching and practising non-violence for fifty years I am going to destroy my life's work ?' "

Referring to people who demanded release of Congress she said, "Nothing is more humiliating than intercession on

our behalf asking for release as a matter of mercy, I would beg kind friends, who when the Congress is out, are so much against us, to desist from pleading for our release. The Country's demand should be, try Congress leaders, face them with the charges against them."

Defining her idea of the trial, she said, "if you had impartial British judges, they would not be biased. I am willing to take my trial before them, not before men from here. But I want the Government also to be tried."

The Government case could not b[illegible] t better by anybody else than the Secret[illegible] a Mr. L. S. Amery. He has been di[illegible] policy followed in India and it was [illegible] able to defend it best. Hence th[illegible] placed in his own words. As regar[illegible] with authority and information w[illegible] than Mrs. Naidu. Hence whate[illegible] ad under the circumstances that has been [illegible] Naidu in her above quoted press-interview.

After this authentic exposition of the two cases, [illegible] of the Government and the Congress, there remains not much to comment. The Government allegations against the Congress and Gandhiji and defence of the Government action and policy are really unconvincing, being false and fictitious. Further they are fully falsified and exposed by the facts as authentically quoted by Mrs. Naidu. It has been very clearly shown there that Gandhiji or the Congress Working Committee have never been pro-Japanese or any-anybody that tried to invade India. She next clearly stated that Gandhiji never interfered in the slightest after he left Delhi in the decision of the Congress Working Committee about the Cripps proposals. Further she reiterated that Gandhiji never intended to start any movement. The idea was that failing negotiations some action might or would be taken and that was left to some future date. As regards violence, Mrs. Naidu very emphatically declared "The Congress Working Committee or Gandhiji, especially Gandhiji, even by implication, by gesture, hint or a beating of the eyelash, suggested to anybody that violence was to be part of the programme, that person, Government or group are propagandists and to use an impolite word, liars.' To prove the statement she quoted Gandhiji himself and also her own personal experience and knowledge. She also explained the slogan "Do or Die" that "it could not possibly mean anything other than do or die within the limits of non-violence." Lastly she declared boldly that she was willing to take her trial before impartial

British Judges if they would not be biased and not before men from here."

She also expressed that she wanted the Government also to be tried. But the Government responded this open challenge with a Ban Order on Mrs. Naidu that she could neither make a public speech nor join in any procession nor address any gathering of more than 5 persons. Besides the press was also banned from publishing her statements or speeches.

So [illegible] ngress case is proved beyond doubt, as the [illegible] defence to offer beyond gagging the Con- [illegible] nts and spokesmen.

[illegible] Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, expressed [illegible] the Congress responsible for "these [illegible] alive of police officials, the wrecking of [illegible] of property, the misleading of these [illegible] o much harm to *India's* good name [illegible] (Letter to Gandhiji January 13, '43,) [illegible] laid whole blame at the door of the [illegible] nd the answer is that the Government goaded the [illegible] iolence in the shape of the arrests already referred to. [illegible] violence is not any the less so, because it is organised on a scale so gigantic that it displaces the Mosaic Law of tooth for tooth by that of ten thousand to one. Further this fact has been admitted and emphatically declared by no less a man than Mr. James Maxton in the debate in the House of Commons :—

"I do not believe any Indian Politician, any supporter of Congress, any average Indian, ever did anything to harm a policeman." (Manchester Guardian, Saturday, September 12, 1943.)

The fact is that truth shall be out. It can never be suppressed. History gives its judgment and the world will have to bow down before it. The judgment shall be one and only one and that is that in August 1942 and after innocent Indians who aspired and demanded their right of independence were brutally subjected to such atrocities and savagery by the British Government in India as were never heard of in the history of humanity.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

A. I. C. C. RESOLUTION

The following is the text of the resolution passed by the All-India Congress Committee at Bomby on Saturday, August 8, 1942 :

"The All-India Congress Committee has given the most careful consideration to the reference made to it by the Working Committee in their resolution dated July 14, 1942, and to subsequent events, including the development of the war situation, the utterances of responsible spokesmen of the British Government, and the comments and criticisms made in India and abroad. The Committee approves of and endorses that resolution, and is of opinion that events subsequent to it have given it further justification, and have made it clear that the immediate ending of British rule in India is an urgent necessity, both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable of defending herself and of contributing to the cause of world freedom.

"The Committee has viewed with dismay the deterioration of the situation on the Russian and Chinese fronts and conveys to the Russian and Chinese peoples its high appreciation of their heroism in defence of their freedom. This incereasing peril makes it incumbent on all those who strive

for freedom and who sympathize with the victims of aggression, to examine the foundations of the policy so far pursued by the allied Nations, which have led to repeated and disastrous failure. It is not by adhering to such aims and policies and methods that failure can be converted into success, for past experience has shown that failure is inherent in them. These policies have been based not on freedom so much as on the domination of subject and Colonial countries, and the continuation of the Imperialist tradition and method. The possession of Empire, ins[illegible] adding to the strength of the ruling power, has becom[illegible] a curse. India, the classic land of [illegible] has become the crux of the question [illegible] India will Britain and the United [illegible] the peoples of Asia and Africa be [illegible] enthusiasm.

"The ending of Britiish rule in thi[illegible] and immediate issue on which de[illegible] and the success of freedom and [illegible] will assure this success by throwing all her [illegible] in the struggle for freedom and against the [illegible] Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism. This will not on[illegible]ct meterially the fortunes of the war, but will bring all subject and oppressed humanity on the side of the United Nations, and give these nations, whose ally India would be, the moral and spiritual leadership of the world. India in bondage will continue to be the symbol of British Imperialism and the taint of that Imperialism will affect the fortunes of the United Nations.

'The peril of today, therefore, necessitates the independence of India and the ending of British domination. No future promises or guarantees can affect the present situation or meet that peril. They cannot produce the needed psychological effect on the mind of the masses. Only the glow of freedom now can release that energy and enthusiasm of millions of people which will immediately transform the nature of the war.

"The A.I.C.C., therefore, repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India. On the declaration of India's independence, a provisional Government will be formed, and free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The provisional Government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite Government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its

primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the non-violent forces at its command, together with its Allied Powers, and to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere, to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The provisional Government will evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly which will prepare a constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. This constitution, according to the Cong- view, should be a federal one, with the largest p- -nomy for the federating units, and with the -sting in these units. The future relations - Allied Nations will be adjusted by -e free countries conferring together -age and for their co-operation in the -g aggression. Freedom will enable - effectively with the people's united

- must be the symbol of and prelude - all other Asiatic nations under foreign - Burma, Malaya, Indo-China, the Dutch Indies, Ir- -raq must also attain their complete freedom. It must be clearly understood that such of these countries as are under Japanese control now must not subsequently be placed under the rule or control of any other Colonial Power.

"While the A.I.C.C. must primarily be concerned with the independence and defence of India in this hour of danger, the Committee is of opinion that the future peace, security and ordered progress of the world demand a world federation of free nations, and on no other basis can the problems of the modern world be solved. Such a federation would ensure the freedom of its constituent nations, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all. On the establishment of such a world federation, disarmament would be practicable in all countries, national armies, navies and air forces would no longer be necessary, and a world federal defence force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression.

"An independent India would gladly join such a world federation and co-operate on an equal basis with other countries in the solution of international problems.

"Such a federation should be open to all nations who agree with its fundamental principles. In view of the war, however, the federation must inevitably, to begin with, be confined to

the United Nations. Such a step taken now will have a most powerful effect on the war, on the peoples of the Axis countries, and on the peace to come.

"The Committee regretfully realizes, however, that despite the tragic and overwhelming lessons of the war and the perils that over-hang the world, the Governments of few countries are yet not prepared to take this inevitable step towards world federation. The reactions of the British Government and the misguided criticisms of the foreign Pr[illegible] also make it clear that even the obvious demand for [illegible]n-dence is resisted, though this has been [illegible] meet the present peril and to enable In[illegible] and help China and Russia in th[illegible] Committee is anxious not to embarras[illegible] of China, of Russia, whose freedom [illegible] preserved, or to jeopardize the d[illegible] United Nations. But the peril [illegible] these nations, and inaction and [illegible] administration at this stage is not on[illegible] reducing her capacity to defend herself and res[illegible] but is no answer to that peril and is no service to [illegible]es of the United Nations. The earnest appeal of the [illegible]king Committee to Great Britain and the United Nations has so far met with no response, and the criticism made in many foreign quarters have shown an ignorance of India's and the world's need, and sometimes even hostility to India's freedom, which is significant of a mentality of domination and racial superiority which cannot be tolerated by a proud people conscious of their strength and of the justice of their cause.

"The A.I.C.C. would yet again, at this last moment, in the interest of world freedom, renew this appeal to Britain and the United Nations. But the Committee feels that it is no longer justified in holding the nation back from endeavouring to assert its will against an imperialist and authoritarian Government which dominates over it and prevents it from functioning in its own interest and in the interest of humanity. The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction, for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last 22 years of peaceful struggle. Such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken.

"The Committee appeals to the people of India to face the dangers and hardships that will fall to their lot with courage

and endurance, and to hold together under the leadership of Gandhiji, and carry out his instructions as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom. They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress Committee can function. When this happens, every man or woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. E[illegible]y Indian who desires freedom and strives for it [illegible]n guide urging him on along the hard road [illegible]ting place and which leads ultimately [illegible]d deliverance of India.

[illegible].C.C. has stated its own view of the [illegible]er free India, the A.I.C.C. wishes to [illegible]ll concerned that by embarking on a [illegible] intention of gaining power for the [illegible]en it comes, will belong to the [illegible]

APPENDIX II

[illegible]NDHIJI'S SPEECHES IN THE BOMBAY A. I. C. C.

Mahatma Gandhi, addressing the A. I. C. C. on 7th August, 1942, said: "Before you discuss the resolution let me place before you one or two things. I want you to understand two things very clearly and to consider them from the same point of view from which I am placing them before you. I ask you to consider it from my point of view because if you approve of it, you will be enjoined to carry out all I say. It will be a great responsibility. There are people who ask me whether I am the same man that I was in 1920 or whether there has been any change in me. You are right in asking that question. I may tell you that I am the same man today that I was in 1920. The only difference is that I am much stronger in certain things now than what I was in 1920. I may explain it by pointing out that a man goes about heavily clothed in winter. But the same man may be found without much clothing in summer. This outward change does not make any difference in the man. There are people who may say that I say one thing today and another thing tomorrow. But I must tell you that there is no change in me. I stick to the principle of non-violence as I did before. If you are tired of it then you need not come with me. It is not necessary or incumbent upon you to pass this resolution. If you want Swaraj and independence and if you feel that what I place before you is a good thing and right thing then

only accept it. It is only that way you can give me complete support. If you do not do that, I am afraid you will have to rue what you do.

"There is not much harm if a man does a wrong thing and repents but in the present case you will be putting the country also in danger. If you do not believe fully in what I say then I will request you not to accept it but to leave it. But if you accept it and do not understand me properly then there is bound to be friction between us, although it may be of a friendly nature.

"Another point I want to impress upon [illegible] responsibility, members of the A. I. C. C [illegible] of a parliament. The Congress rep[illegible] India. The Congress from its [illegible] been of any particular group or any [illegible] caste or of any particular province. [illegible] since its birth, to represent the wh[illegible] behalf I have made the claim that [illegible] registered members of the Congress [illegible]

"Referring to the princes, Mahatma Gandhi [illegible] were the creation of the British power. Their n[illegible] be 600 or more. They are created by the ruling p[illegible] as you know, to create differences between Indian India and British India. It may be true that there are differences in the conditions obtaining in British and Indian India but according to the people of the states there is no difference as such. The Congress claims to represent them as well. The policy which the Congress adopted towards the states was drawn up at my instance. There have been some changes but the basis remains the same. Whatever the princes may say, their people will acclaim that we have been asking for the very thing that they want. If we carry on this struggle in the way I want it, the princes will get more through it than they can ever expect. I have met some princes and they have stated their helplessness by saying that we are more free than they are because they can be removed by the paramount power.

"I will again remind you that you should accept the resolution only if you approve of it from your heart because if you do not do that you will expose both you and me to danger. That is the warning I want to give you. I did not, in the past, have before me the material I have ready today. God has given me an opportunity and if I do not have it, I will be a fool. Not only will I lose myself but I will be throwing away that great jewel of non-violence that God has placed in my hands.

"I would not take up much of your time because if you

accept the resolution then I will have to address you again but even then I would not take more than an hour of your time. What I want you to understand clearly is the way you have to tread and the man with whom you have to travel.

"There are people who say that I am meant for destruction and that I do not know how to construct a thing. The reason is that I do not get an opportunity to construct. If I were given an opportunity I would certainly welcome it and I hope to [illegible]w what can be done. I am accused of demolishi[illegible] you understand it properly, when freedom [illegible] reconstruct what has been demolished. [illegible] the beginning that confidence in yourself. [illegible]unity of running the government at [illegible]es. We did put in good work which [illegible]e British Government.

[illegible]t finish with the attainment of freedom. [illegible]scars, of course, in a non-violent [illegible]s they get power become dictators. [illegible] such dictators in our scheme of things. [illegible] to achieve independence and whoever can t[illegible] reins may do so. It may be that you decide to plac[illegible] in the hands of the Parsi. You should not say why should the Parsis be entrusted with power. It may be that power may be given to those whose names have never been heard in the Congress. It will be for the people to decide. You should not feel that the majority of those who fought for it were Hindus and the number of Muslims and Parsis in the fight was small. The entire atmoshphere will change when we get independence.

"There are people who have hatred in their heart for the British. I have heard people saying that they are disgusted with them. The mind of the common people does not differentiate between the Britisher and the imperialistic form of their government. To them both are the same. There are people who do not mind the advent of the Japanese. To them, perhaps, it would mean a change of masters. But it is a dangerous thing. You must remove it from your mind. This is a crucial hour. If we keep quiet and don't play our part, it would not be right on our part, it would not be right on our part. If it is only Britain and the United States who fight this war, and if our part is only to give monetary help, whether given willingly or taken from us unwillingly, it is not a very happy proposition. But we can show our real grit and valour only when it becomes our own fight. Then even a child will be brave.

"We shall get our freedom by fighting. It cannot fall from the skies. I know fully well that Britishers will have

to give us freedom when we have made sufficient sacrifices and proved our strength. We must remove hatred for the British from our hearts. At least in my heart there is no such hatred. As a matter of fact I am a greater friend of the British now than I ever was. The reason for this is that at this moment they are in distress. My friendship demands that I must make them aware of their mistakes, as I am not in the position in which they are. They are on the brink of a ditch and are about to fall into it. Therefore, even if they want to cut off my hands [illegible]endship demands that I should try to pull them out of [illegible]

"This is my claim at which many pe[illegible] all the same I say that this is true. A[illegible] about to launch the biggest fight in [illegible] hatred for the British in my heart. The[illegible] they are in difficulties I should give [illegible] absent from my mind. It has neve[illegible] be that in a moment of anger th[illegible] might provoke you. Nevertheless, [illegible] violence and put non-violence to shame. [illegible] happens you may take it that you will not fin[illegible] wherever I may be. Their blood will be on yo[illegible] If you do not understand this, it would be better if you reject this resolution. It will redound to your credit.

"How can I blame you for things which you may not be able to grasp ? There is one principle in the fight which you must adopt. Never believe—as I have never believed—that the British are going to fail, I do not consider them to be a nation of cowards. I know that before they accept defeat, every soul in Britain will be sacrificed. They may be defeated and they may leave you just as they left the people of Burma, Malaya and other places, with the idea of recapturing lost ground when they can. That may be their military strategy, but supposing they leave us, what happens to us ? In that case Japan will come here. The coming in of Japan will mean the end of China, and perhaps of Russia too. In these matters Pandit Nehru is my 'guru' I do not want to be the instrument of Russia's defeat nor of China's. If that happens, I would hate myself.

"You know I like to go at rapid speed. But it may be that I am not going as rapidly as you want me to. Sardar Patel is reported to have said that the campaign may be over in a week. I do not want to be in a hurry. If it ends in a week it will be a miracle, and if this happens, it would mean the melting of the British heart. It may be that wisdom will dawn on the British and they will understand it to be wrong for them to put in jail the very people who

want to fight for them. It may be that a change may come in Mr. Jinnah's mind too. After all, he will think that those who are fighting are the sons of the soil and if he sits quiet, of what use would 'Pakistan' be for him ?

"Non-violence is a weapon which can help everyone. I know we have not done much by way of non-violence and therefore if such a change comes about I will take it as the result of our labours during the last 22 years, and that God has [illegible]ed us to achieve it.

"[illegible] raised the slogan 'Quit India', people in India [illegible] feeling despondent felt that I had placed [illegible] thing. If you want real freedom you [illegible]ther and such coming together will [illegible]acy—a democracy the like of which [illegible] witnessed, nor have there been any [illegible]h a type of true democracy. I have [illegible] French Revolution. But I hold that [illegible] for the people, it was not a fight [illegible]racy which I envisage. My democracy [illegible] everyone is his own master. I have read suffi[illegible]y, and I have not seen such an experiment on su[illegible] large scale for the establishment of democracy by non-violence. Once you understand these things, you will forget difference between Hindus and Muslims.

"The resolution that is placed before you says that we do not want to remain frogs in a well. We are aiming at a world federation. It can come only through non-violence. Disarmament is only possible if you use the matchless weapon of non-violence. There are people who may call me a visionary but I tell you I am a real 'bania' and my business is to obtain Swaraj. If you do not accept this resolution I would not be sorry for it. On the contrary, I would dance with joy because you would then relieve me of the tremendous responsibility which you are now going to place on me. I want you to adopt non-violence as a matter of policy. With me it is a creed, but so far as you are concerned I want you to accept it as a policy. As disciplined soldiers you must accept it in toto and stick to it when you join the struggle."

II

'I take up my task of leading you in this struggle not as your commander, not as your controller, but as the humble servant of you all and he who serves best becomes the chief among them. I am the chief servant of the nation; that is how I look at it' declared Mahatma Gandhi addressing the audience in English towards the end of his speech. He added: 'I want to share all the shocks that you have to face'.

Gandhiji referred to the interpretations put in foreign countries on his utterances during the last three weeks and said: 'I know that in the course of the last few weeks I have forfeited the privilege of the friendship and the trust of many of my friends in India and abroad, so much so that they now have begun, some to doubt my wisdom and some even to doubt my honesty. My wisdom is not such a treasure which I cannot afford to lose, but honesty is a precious treasure to me.'

Gandhiji when referred to the friendship [illegible] ich had grown between him and many Viceroys, and [illegible] between him and Lord Linlithgow. [illegible] which has outgrown mere official rela[illegible] Linlithgow will bear me out. But per[illegible] sprung up between him and me a frie[illegible] secret.

Gandhiji then referred to the deep [illegible] for the late C. F. Andrews and [illegible] moment the spirit of Andrews is sw[illegible] seems to me to be the highest that I [illegible] English. With Andrews I enjoyed a relatio[illegible] than which I have not enjoyed with any Indian. [illegible] no secret between us; we exchanged our hearts every day. Whatever was in his heart he would blurt out without the slighest hesitation or reservation. It is true he was a friend of Gurudev (Tagore), but he was awed by the presence of Gurudev.'

With this background, I want to declare to the world that whatever may be said today to the contrary, and although I may have forfeited the regard of many a friend of the West—even trust—of some of them—even for their love and for their friendship I must not suppress the voice within me. Call it conscience, call it by anything you like; call it the promptings of my basic nature; I do not mind how you describe it but there is something there. I have learnt psychology and I know exactly what "it" is, although I may not be able to describe it to you. That voice tells me that I shall have to fight against the whole world and stand alone; it also tells me "you are safe so long as you stare the world in the face, although the world may have blood-shot eyes. Do not fear that world but go ahead, with the fear of God in you. That thing is within me. You have to forsake wife, friends, forsake everything in the world. I want to live whole span of my life. But I do not think I will live so long. When I am gone, India will be free and not only will India be free but the whole world will be free."

"I do not believe that the Americans are free or that

England is free; they may be free according to the conception. I know my purpose ; I know what freedom is. English teachers have taught me its meaning I must interpret that freedom according to what I can see and what I have experienced.'

Gandhiji then referred to the work and philosophy of Dadabhoy Naoroji, Sir Pheroz Shah Mehta and others and said that unconsciously, from its very inception, the Congress has alwa... been non-violent, I do not claim that every Congre... conforms to the highest principles of non-... a policy. I know that there are many black ...ting them, in general, without subjecting ...on. It is this fundamental trust that ... very beginning, the Congress in ...—which is to bring about Swaraj—has

...tics to search their hearts before ... Gandhiji said : 'I want English-...tions to examine their breasts and ... what crime has the Congress committed i... independence today ? Is it wrong to do so, is it ... distrust that organization ? I hope Englishmen would not do it. I hope that it would not be done by the President of the United States, by the Chinese Generalissimo, Marshal Chiang Kaishek, who is still fighting desperate battles with Japan for his existence.'

After having own Jawaharlal as a comrade I hope he would not do it. I fell in love with Madame Chiang Kai Shek. She was my interpreter and I have no reason to doubt that she was a faithful interpreter to her husband. Gandhiji added that she had not as yet said that we were wrong in demanding our independence. I have great regard for British diplomacy which has enabled them to hold the empire so long. But now others had studied that diplomacy and were putting them into practice.

Gandhiji asserted that 'even if all the United Nations opposed me, even if the whole of India tried to persuade me that I am wrong, I will go ahead. Not for India's sake alone but for the sake of the world'. Gandhiji declared that Britain had given India the greatest provocations, but in spite of all that 'We would not hit below the belt. We have too far progressed in real gentlemanly fashion ; we will not stoop to any such thing'. Gandhiji then explained the difference between his non-embarrassment policy in the recent past and his present policy. That policy was non-embarrassment, consistent with the honour and safety of India. There

is no inconsistency between what we demand today and what we demanded before, he added.

Addressing the United Nations and Britain Gandhiji said they had the opportunity, now, of a lifetime to declare India free and prove their real intention. "If they miss it, they will be missing the opportunity of a lifetime, which never comes twice in the same generation and history will say that they did not discharge their overdue debt to India. I ask for the blessings of the whole world and I ask for the [illegible]ive assistance of the United Nations. I do not want [illegible] nothing more to them."

Gandhiji continuing said that he had [illegible] between fascism and the democraci[illegible] limitations and even between fascism a[illegible]

Concluding Gandhiji said: 'I have [illegible] and the Congress will do or die'.

Speaking in Hindustani Ma[illegible] congratulate you on passing t[illegible] opposed it also deserve my congratu[illegible] conviction. There is no shame in opposing [illegible] We have learnt this lesson since 1920. It is bette[illegible] a minority provided we stick to truth and determin[illegible]. I have learnt this lesson long ago. I have now learnt a further lesson from the dissenting members. I am pleased to note that they have followed me in this direction. I would venture to suggest that the proposals that have been submitted are not perfect. Everything has got one or other deficiency. Nothing is perfect. Nothing is perfect except truth. Maulana Saheb and Jawahar have explained to you the implications of this resolution.

"There was a time when every Muslim was professing that India was his motherland. The Ali Brothers believed in it. I am not prepared to believe for a moment that it was a lie or bluff. I would prefer to be ignorant than to doubt my colleagues. Thousands of Hindus and Muslims have told me that if the Congress is really serious to solve the communal tangle and establish permanent unity it can be achieved during my life time only. From the very childhood of mine I am a firm believer in Hindu-Muslim and communal unity. From my very school days I have a firm conviction in the unity of India.

"When I had been to Africa I undertook the brief for a Muslim client. I championed their cause there. I never distrust them. Did not return from Africa as a disappointed or as a defeated man. I do not care for the abuses which are being hurled on me by some of my Muslim friends. I do not know what I have done that has offended them.

I am undoubtedly a worshipper of cow. It is my belief that every creature on this earth is the creation of God. My friends especially the Muslims, Maulana Bari and Maulana Azad can testify to this fact. I dine with all without any consideration to their caste or religion.

"I hate none and there is no hatred in me. The late Maulana Bari was my host in Lucknow. He was a thorough gentleman. It was the time when there was no mutual distrust or suspicion. Mr. Jinnah had been a Congressman in the [illegible] He seems now to be misguided. I pray long [illegible] and wish that he may survive me. A day [illegible] wn when he will realise that I have [illegible] or the Muslims. I have the fullest confi- [illegible] of the Muslims. I will never talk ill [illegible] all me. They have every right to form [illegible] but I still continue to be the same [illegible]. Muslims may, in the heat of the [illegible] es and abuse me, Islam does not [illegible] Muslims of India are the true [illegible] Prophet then let them follow his teach- [illegible] y.

[illegible] n the influence of the Maulana could not dissuade the dissenting members to withdraw their amendments. I am glad they, according to their conviction, voted freely.

"World federation could only be established by mutual agreement. I would pray to my Muslim brothers to judge for themselves dispassionately, which is right and which is wrong.

"Let the issue be decided by a tribunal and let us all abide by the verdict of the tribunal. If the Muslim League is not prepared to accept this offer then how can they expect to force the scheme upon others by mere coercion ?

"Let them persuade their fellow countrymen to their point of view and make them agreeable to the scheme of Pakistan. If they failed to convince and convert this would lead to internal strife. I have no desire to live to witness such a tragedy. Islam never teaches its followers to hate any one. It preaches universal brotherhood and a spirit of mutual tolerance. I am devoting my time and energy and I am even prepared to lay down my life for the mission which has been entrusted to me by God. Hindu-Muslim unity is dear to my life. I have no mental reservation on the issue of Pakistan. Pakistan cannot be away from Hindustan. Let both and all of us strive for the attainment of freedom of India.

"Mr. Jinnah does not seem to believe in the Congress programme and in the Congress demand. But I cannot wait any longer for India's freedom. I cannot wait till Mr. Jinnah

is converted for the immediate consummation of Indian freedom. I am very impatient. Communal unity is undoubtedly essential for country's freedom but you must know it is freedom for all and not for any particular community. I wholeheartedly endorse the Maulana Sahib's offer to the British that India be handed over to any community. I would not be sorry if the authority is transferred to the Muslim masses.

"India is the homeland of Indian Muslims. For instance, take the case of my son Hiralal, he had embrace[illegible] By changing his religion can he disown his [illegible] country ? Supposing he is able to chan[illegible] country, all the same he cannot disow[illegible] the persuasion of his mother he [illegible] wife told me that she was not sorry [illegible] changed his religion but was sorry bec[illegible] My grandson went in search of his [illegible] him he saw that he was addicted to [illegible]

APPENDIX III

MAHATMA'S LETTER TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

The following is the text of Mahatma Gandhi's letter to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek :—

"Dear Generalissimo,

I can never forget the five hours' close contact I had with you and your noble wife in Calcutta. I had always felt drawn towards you in your fight for freedom, and that contact and our conversation brought China and her problems still nearer to me. Long ago between 1905 and 1913, when I was in South Africa, I was in constant touch with the small Chinese colony in Johansburg, I knew them first as clients and then as comrades in the Indian passive resistance struggle in South Africa. I came in touch with them in Mauritius also. I learnt, then, to admire their thrift, industry, resourcefulness and internal unity. Later in India I had a very fine Chinese friend living with me for a few years and we all learnt to like him.

I have thus felt greatly attracted towards your great country and in common with my countrymen, our sympathy has gone out to you in your terrible struggle. Our mutual friend, Jawaharlal Nehru, whose love of China is only excelled, if at all, by his love of his own country has kept us in intimate touch with the developments of the Chinese struggle.

Because of this feeling I have towards China and my earnest desire that our two great countries should come closer

to one another and cooperate to their mutual advantage, I am anxious to explain to you that my appeal to the British Power to withdraw from India is not meant in any shape or form to weaken India's defence against the Japanese or embarrass you in your struggle. India must not submit to any aggressor or invader and must resist him. I would not be guilty of purchasing the freedom of my country at the cost of your country's freedom. That problem does not arise before me as I am c[illegible]r that India cannot gain her freedom in this way, an[illegible] domination of either India or China would be [illegible] the other country and to world peace. [illegible], therefore, be prevented and I should [illegible]tural and rightful part in this. [illegible]do so while she is in bondage. India [illegible]ness of the withdrawals from Malaya, [illegible] We must learn the lesson from these [illegible]t by all means at our disposal a [illegible] these unfortunate countries. But [illegible]e can do nothing to prevent it, and the [illegible] might well occur again, crippling India and C[illegible]trously. I do not want a repetition of this tragic fate [illegible] woe.

Our proffered help has repeatedly been rejected by the British Government and the recent failure of the Cripps mission has left a deep wound which is still running. Out of that anguish has come the cry for immediate withdrawal of British Power so that India can look after herself and help China to the best of her ability.

I have told you of my faith in non-violence and of my belief in the effectiveness of this method if the whole nation could turn to it. That faith in it is as firm as ever. But I realise that India today as a whole has not that faith and belief and the Government in free India would be formed from the various elements composing the nation.

Today the whole of India is impotent and feels frustrated. The Indian Army consists largely of people who have joined up because of economic pressure. They have no feeling of a cause to fight for, and in no sense are they a national army. Those of us who would fight for a cause, for India and China, with armed forces or with non-violence cannot, under the foreign heel, function as they want to. And yet our people know for certain that India free can play even a decisive part not only on her own behalf, but also on behalf of China and world peace. Many, like me, feel that it is not proper or manly to remain in this helpless state and allow events to overwhelm us when a way to effective action can be opened to us. They feel, therefore, that every possible effort should

be made to ensure independence and that freedom of action which is so urgently needed. This is the origin of my appeal to the British Power to end immediately the unnatural connection between Britain and India.

Unless we make that effort there is grave danger of public feeling in India going into wrong and harmful channels. There is every likelihood of subterranean sympathy for Japan growing simply in order to weaken and oust British authority in India. This feeling may take the place of robust confidence in our ability never to look t[illegible]ders for help in winning our freedom. We have to [illegible] and develop the strength to work out our [illegible] is only possible if we make a determi[illegible] selves from bondage. That freedo[illegible] necessity to enable us to take our due [illegible] nations of the world.

To make it perfectly clear th[illegible] every way Japanese aggression, I [illegible] I am sure the Government of free[illegible] the Allied Powers might, under treaty with [illegible] armed forces in India and use the country as a b[illegible] tions against the threatened Japanese attack.

I need hardly give you my assurance that, as the author of the new move in India, I shall take no hasty action. And whatever action I may recommend will be governed by the consideration that it should not injure China or encourage Japanese aggression in India or China. I am trying to enlist world opinion in favour of a proposition which to me appears self-proved and which must lead to the strengthening of India's and China's defence. I am also educating public opinion in India and conferring with my colleagues. Needless to say any movement against the British Government with which I may be connected will be essentially non-violent. I am straining every nerve to avoid a conflict with British authority. But if in the vindication of the freedom which has become an immediate desideratum, this becomes inevitable, I shall not hesitate to run any risk, however great.

Very soon you will have completed five years of war against Japanese aggression and invasion and all the sorrow and misery that they have brought to China. My heart goes out to the people of China in deep sympathy and in admiration for their heroic struggle and endless sacrifices to the cause of their country's freedom and integrity against tremendous odds. I am convinced that this heroism and sacrifice cannot be in vain; they must bear fruit. To you, to Madame Chiang and to the great people of China, I send my earnest and sincere wishes for your success. I look forward to the day

when a free India and a free China will co-operate together in friendship and brotherhood for their own good and for the good of Asia and the world.

In anticipation of your permission, I am taking the liberty of publishing this letter in 'Harijan'.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI."

APPENDIX IV

TO AMERICAN FRIENDS

[illegible] ticle addressed to Americans was written [illegible] August 3, and published in 'Harijan'

[illegible] tery of truth from my childhood. It [illegible] ing to me. My prayerful search gave [illegible] "Truth is God" instead of the usual [illegible] maxim enables me to see God face [illegible] Him pervade every fibre of my being. [illegible] uth as witness between you and me, I assert that [illegible] have asked my country to invite Great Britain to [illegible] draw her rule over India, irrespective of any damand to the contrary, if I had not seen at once that for the sake of Great Britain and the Allied cause it was necessary for Britain boldly to perform the duty of freeing India from bondage.

By that supreme act of justice Britain would have taken away all cause for the seething discontent of India. She will turn the growing ill-will into good-will. I submit that it is worth all the battleships and airships that your wonder-working engineers and financial resources can produce.

I know that interested propaganda has filled your ears and eyes with distorted visions of the Congress position. I have been painted as hypocrite and enemy of Britain under disguise. My demonstrable spirit of accommodation has been described as my inconsistency, proving me to be an utterly unreliable man. I am not going to burden this letter with proof in support of my assertions. If the credit I have enjoyed in America will not stand me in good stead, nothing I may argue in self-defence will carry conviction.

You have made common cause with Great Britain. You cannot, therefore, disown responsibility for anything that her representatives do in India. You will do a grievous wrong to the Allied cause if you do not sift the truth from the chaff whilst there is yet time. Just think of it. Is there anything wrong in the Congress demanding unconditional recognition of India's Independence? It is being said: "But this is not the time". We say this is the psychological moment for that

recognition. For then and then only can there be irresistible opposition to Japanese aggression. It is of immense value to the Allied cause if it is also of equal value to India. The Congress has anticipated and provided for every possible difficulty in the way of recognition. I want you to look upon the immediate recognition of India's independence as a war measure of first class magnitude."

M. K. GANDHI

APPENDIX V

TO EVERY JAPANESE

(An open letter of Gandhiji pu[illegible] 'Harijan' before his [illegible]

I must confess at the outset that tho[illegible] against you, I intensely dislike you[illegible] From your lofty height you have[illegible] ambition. You will fail to realiz[illegible] become the authors of the dismem[illegible] wittingly preventing World Federation and[illegible] without which there can be no hope for humanity.

Ever since I was a lad of eighteen studying in [illegible]n over fifty years ago, I learnt, through the writings of the late Sir Edwin Arnold, to prize the many excellent qualities of your nation. I was thrilled when in South Africa I learnt of your brilliant victory over Russian arms. After my return to India from South Africa in 1915, I came in close touch with Japanese monks who lived as members of our Ashram from time to time. One of them became a valuable member of the Ashram in Sevagram, and his application to duty, his dignified bearing, his unfailing devotion to daily worship, affability, unruffledness under varying circumstances, and his natural smile, which was positive evidence of his inner peace, had endeared him to all of us. And now that owing to your declaration of war against Great Britain he has been taken away from us, we miss him as a dear co-worker. He has left behind him as a memory his daily prayer and his little drum, to the accompaniment of which we open our morning and evening prayer.

In the background of these pleasant recollections, I grieve deeply as I contemplate what appears to me to be your unprovoked attack against China and, if reports are to be believed, your merciless devastation of that great and ancient land.

It was a worthy ambition of yours to take equal rank with the Great Powers of the World. Your aggression against China and your alliance with the Axis Powers was surely an unwarranted excess of the ambition.

I should have thought that you would be proud of the fact that great and ancient people, whose old classical literature you have adopted as your own, are your neighbours. Your understanding of one another's history, tradition, literature should bind you as friends rather than make you the enemies you are to-day.

If I was a free man, and if you allowed me to come to your country, frail though I am, I would not mind risking my health, may be my life, to come to your country to plead with yo[illegible] desist from the wrong you are doing to China [illegible]nd, therefore, to yourself.

[illegible]uch freedom. And we are in the unique [illegible]resist an imperialism that we detest no [illegible]azism. Our resistance to it does not [illegible]ish people. We seek to convert them. [illegible]revolt against British rule. An important [illegible]y is engaged in a deadly but friendly [illegible]lers.

[illegible]no aid from Foreign Powers. You [illegible] misinformed, as I know you are, that we [illegible] this particular moment to embarrass the Allies [illegible]ur attack against India is imminent. If we wanted to turn Britain's difficulty into our opportunity, we should have done it as soon as the War broke out nearly three years ago.

Our movement demanding the withdrawal of the British Power from India should in no way be misunderstood. In fact, if we are to believe your reported anxiety for the Independence of India, a recognition of that Independence by Britain, should leave you no excuse for any attack on India. Moreover, the reported profession sorts ill with your ruthless aggression against China.

I would ask you to make no mistake about the fact that you will be sadly disillusioned if you believe that you will receive a willing welcome from India. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India, by making her free for resisting all militarist and imperialist ambition, whether it is called British Imperialism, German Nazism, or your pattern. If we do not, we shall have been ignoble spectators of the militarization of the world in spite of our belief that in non-violence we have the only solvent of the militarist spirit and ambition. Personally, I fear that without declaring the Independence of India, the Allied Powers will not be able to beat the Axis combination which has raised violence to the dignity of a religion. The Allies cannot beat you and your ruthless and skilled warfare. If they copy it, their declaration that they will save the world

for democracy and individual freedom must come to naught. I feel that they can only gain strength to avoid copying your ruthlessness by declaring and recognising now the freedom of India, and turning sullen India's forced co-operation into freed India's voluntary co-operation.

To Britain and the Allies we have appealed in the name of justice, in proof of their professions and in their own self-interest. To you I appeal in the name of humanity. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that ruthless warfare is nobody's monopoly. If not the Allies, some oth[illegible]ver will certainly improve upon your method and be[illegible] own weapon. Even if you win, you wi[illegible] your people of which they would feel pr[illegible] pride in a recital of cruel deeds, how[illegible]

Even if you win, it will not prove [illegible] right. It will only prove that your p[illegible] greater. This applies obviously to th[illegible] perform now the just and righteo[illegible] an earnest and promise of similarl[illegible] peoples in Asia and Africa.

Our appeal to Britain is coupled with the o[illegible] India's willingness to let the Allies retain their [illegible]n India. The offer is made in order to prove that we do not in any way mean to harm the Allies' cause, and in order to prevent you from being misled into feeling that you have but to step into the country that Britain has vacated. Needless to repeat that if you cherish any such idea and will carry it out, we will not fail in resisting you with all the might that our country can muster. I address this appeal to you in the hope that our movement may even influence you and your partners in the right direction and deflect you and them from the course which is bound to end in your moral ruin and the reduction of human being to robots.

The hope of your response to my appeal is much fainter than that of response from Britain. I know that the British are not devoid of a sense of justice and they know you enough to be able to judge. All I have read tells me that you listen to no appeal but to the sword. How I wish that you are cruelly misrepresented and that I shall touch the right chord in your heart! Anyway I have an undying faith in the responsiveness of human nature. On the strength of that faith I have conceived the impending movement in India, and it is that faith which has prompted this appeal to you.

I am,

Your friend and well-wisher,

M. K. Gandhi

Sevagram, 18. 7. 42.

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